

SUSTAINABLE NORTHAMPTON
Draft Comprehensive Plan

Cover Page

This is a draft of the comprehensive plan, *Sustainable Northampton*.

Comments may be emailed to:

sustainablenorthampton@cecilgroup.com

Table of Contents

THE PROCESS	3
FINANCIAL SPONSORS	3
THE APPROACH	4
THE VISION	7
GUIDING PRINCIPLES	8
THE ELEMENTS AND MEASURES OF SUCCESS	8
LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT	11
ENVIRONMENT	19
OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION	23
ENERGY AND CLIMATE PROTECTION	25
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	29
ARTS AND CULTURE	39
HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES	41
HOUSING	42
INFRASTRUCTURE AND CAPITAL RESOURCES	45
TRANSPORTATION	47
MUNICIPAL GOVERNANCE AND FINANCIAL STABILITY	55
EDUCATION	57
SOCIAL EQUITY	59
Glossary of Terms	64
Appendices:	
Note boxes	
Listing of City Boards, Committees and Commissions	

Notes on Current Draft

This draft is not in final graphic format. Notes and images will be added in the final version.

THE PROCESS

Sustainable Northampton is based upon information drawn from public forums, focus groups, surveys, and from previous community plans over a 16-month community planning process. In June 2005, Mayor Mary Clare Higgins initiated a comprehensive planning process with a sustainability focus. A Steering Committee was established to oversee and guide the plan consisting of representatives from City boards, City staff, and community groups. Public grants and private donations were received to launch the *Sustainable Northampton* planning process.

Research and Public Participation Process

The following organizations and documents helped form the plan:

- American Institute of Architects – Sustainable Design Assessment Team (SDAT) led a public input process and prepared a document including an assessment of current conditions, a vision for a sustainable future, and recommended strategies.
- Pioneer Valley Planning Commission researched and analyzed sustainable community indicators.
- Donahue Institute (University of Massachusetts) collected economic data.
- Vanesse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. prepared a briefing paper on form-based zoning.
- Edith M. Netter & Associates prepared a new transfer of development rights and 40R smart growth overlay district zoning ordinance.

In March and April of 2006, the City held nine focus groups and neighborhood meetings, with the assistance of Walter Cudnohovsky Associates, to obtain public input on the following questions:

- Characteristics and community values that should guide Northampton
- Social, economic, and/or physical changes that have most affected the community
- Areas of conflict among various goals and visions for a sustainable Northampton
- Key areas of concern around sustainability
- Key actions, policies, or infrastructure improvements needed to support a sustainable vision.

In January 2006, the City distributed a survey to every household via the annual census resulting in over 3000 responses. Those responses have been collated and summarized in charts and tables.

In the Fall of 2006, the City held two “did we get it right” workshops, with the assistance of Walter Cudnohovsky Associates, to ensure that the community had a chance to comment on the summary of the focus group meetings.

The Steering Committee with the assistance of The Cecil Group synthesized all of the community input, data, and previous plans into a comprehensive plan for presentation to the community and for adoption by the Planning Board and City Council.

FINANCIAL SPONSORS

We wish to thank the following sponsors who allowed this plan to be written:

- American Institute of Architects
- Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development

- Greater Northampton Area Chamber of Commerce
- Smith College
- Bay State Gas
- National Grid
- City of Northampton

SUSTAINABLE NORTHAMPTON STEERING COMMITTEE

The following individuals have provided their time over the course of this planning effort as the Sustainable Northampton Steering Committee:

Mayor Clare Higgins
City Council
 Michael R. Bardsley, President
 Marilyn Richards, Ward 3
 Marianne LaBarge, Ward 6
Arts Council
 Elizabeth Stone
Board of Public Works
 Robert Reckman, Chair
Board of Health
 Xanthi Scrimgeour
Conservation Commission
 John Body
Housing Partnership
 Martha Acklesburg, Chair
Planning Board
 Francis Johnson, Chair
 Kenneth Jodrie
 Paul Voss
 Keith Wilson
School Committee
 Katherine Foote-Newman
Transportation and Parking Commission
 Leslie Stein
Tree Committee, Leeds Civic Association
 Deb Jacobs
Youth Commission
 Owen Hooks-Davis
 Hannah McQuillan
Zoning Board of Appeals
 Elizabeth Wroblicka
Bay State Village Association
 Jan Sniffen
Smith College
 Laurie Fenlason
 Tom Litwin
Casa Latina
 Eneida Garcia
 Lillian Torres
Center for Ecological Technology
 Peggy MacLeod
Cooley Dickinson Hospital
 Richard Corder, Vice President-Guest Services

Northampton Center for the Arts
Ann Shanahan
Northampton Chamber of Commerce
Suzanne Beck, Director
Dennis Bidwell, Economic Development Committee, Chair
Pioneer Valley Planning Commission
Catherine Miller, Principal Planner
Valley Community Development Corporation
Joanne Campbell, Executive Director
Western Massachusetts American Institute of Architects
Erica Gees
Building
Anthony Patillo, Building Commissioner
Economic Development
Teri Anderson, Economic Development Coordinator
Office of Planning and Development
Wayne Feiden, Director
Carolyn Misch, Senior Land Use Planner
Recreation Department
Ann-Marie Moggio, Director

THE APPROACH

Northampton has developed—over many months and with input from a wide array of constituencies—a vision for its future as well the goals, principles and strategies required to support and implement that vision. This undertaking, called *Sustainable Northampton*, is a comprehensive plan that seeks to ensure the city can continue to meet its current and ongoing environmental, social and economic needs without compromising the future for succeeding generations.

As a practical matter, finite resources, coupled with a significant desire to better support a diverse and sustainable community, require the city to make choices about how best to use its natural, social, economic, and human resources. City residents and elected officials recognize that these choices are local decisions that will impact the natural environment, the community, and quality of life, and are intended to guide Northampton's role locally, regionally, and globally.

Sustainable Northampton commits the city to becoming a model community for sustainable policies and practices.

The plan is intended in its most important form as a plan of action for the next five years. However, there are several aspects that cut across that time frame:

- Sustainability is a concept for ensuring a high quality of life for future generations. Consequently, the plan projects that these actions will provide benefits far into the future.
- Some actions are continuations of recent programs and require continued diligence to maintain. Consequently, some of these actions 'flow through' the plan.
- The metrics or measurements of progress are intended to be part of a yearly report to inform the City how well this plan is achieving these goals. Consequently, the City will receive a report card each year and every five years can revisit the proposals in this plan and update them to ensure the plan maintains the course towards true sustainability.

THE VISION

The vision for Northampton's future that has emerged from community discussion is focused on social equity, economic vitality and environmental security for its citizens, the community, and its built and natural resources. It is a vision that seeks to ensure that the city will continue to be highly valued by future generations. It recognizes the leadership role Northampton can play in the broader region by advancing sustainable economic, environmental, and social agendas.

These commitments, expressed during community meetings, will help maintain Northampton's distinctive character, and ensure the City remains an exceptional place to live, work, and play:

Northampton affirms its commitment to:

- **Inclusiveness, tolerance and civic-mindedness** by embracing diversity and encouraging full participation in community conversations. It is assumed that controversy and debate, which is to be expected, will be resolved by a community commitment to the city's long-term well-being.
- **Vibrancy** as a city that supports arts, non-profit organizations, higher education and businesses in an atmosphere that allows growth and prosperity while conserving our heritage, natural resources, and history. We will build on and celebrate our uniqueness as a community;
- **Leadership** in the advancement of sustainable practices that manage land use for long-term benefits, reduce dependency on nonrenewable fuels, reduce consumption of resources without offsetting benefits, and improve our impact on the environment.

Northampton will achieve this vision by following a set of Guiding Principles leading the key actions and strategies of the Comprehensive Plan. The corresponding metrics and targets will measure success.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Supporting a diverse and integrated community where all residents have the opportunity to excel on a social, economic, and academic level and to lead independent and successful lives;
- Acting as a part of a broader region via any of the aspects connecting us beyond our municipal borders, such as watersheds, rivers, roads, economy, culture, or common goals;
- Improving energy efficiency in city buildings and programs, and encouraging conservation and use of alternative and renewable energy sources throughout the community;
- Supporting a wide variety of housing types that increase rental and homeownership units: to create and preserve a range of affordability and choice in housing options;
- Supporting artists and arts, local culture and history, and education at all levels as vital to a successful well-balanced community;
- Connecting municipal capital improvements directly to the goals of Sustainable Northampton;
- Adopting land use patterns that maintain a mix of urban and rural areas; concentrate development in neighborhood, village, and commercial centers supported by adequate infrastructure, including public transit; promoting energy efficiency; and protecting environmental and agricultural resources.
- Recognizing and fostering the unique history, character and function of each residential, commercial, mixed use and open space neighborhood.
- Recognizing that a diverse and vibrant economy is integral to a successful community and supporting business and job development that contributes to the community and the city's long-term sustainability;
- Making the city increasingly more walkable, bikeable, and transit-oriented;
- Improving citizens' lives through continuous, high quality education; and,
- Operating the city as a democratic enterprise responsive and responsible to the fiscal, economic, social, and environmental interests of its citizens.

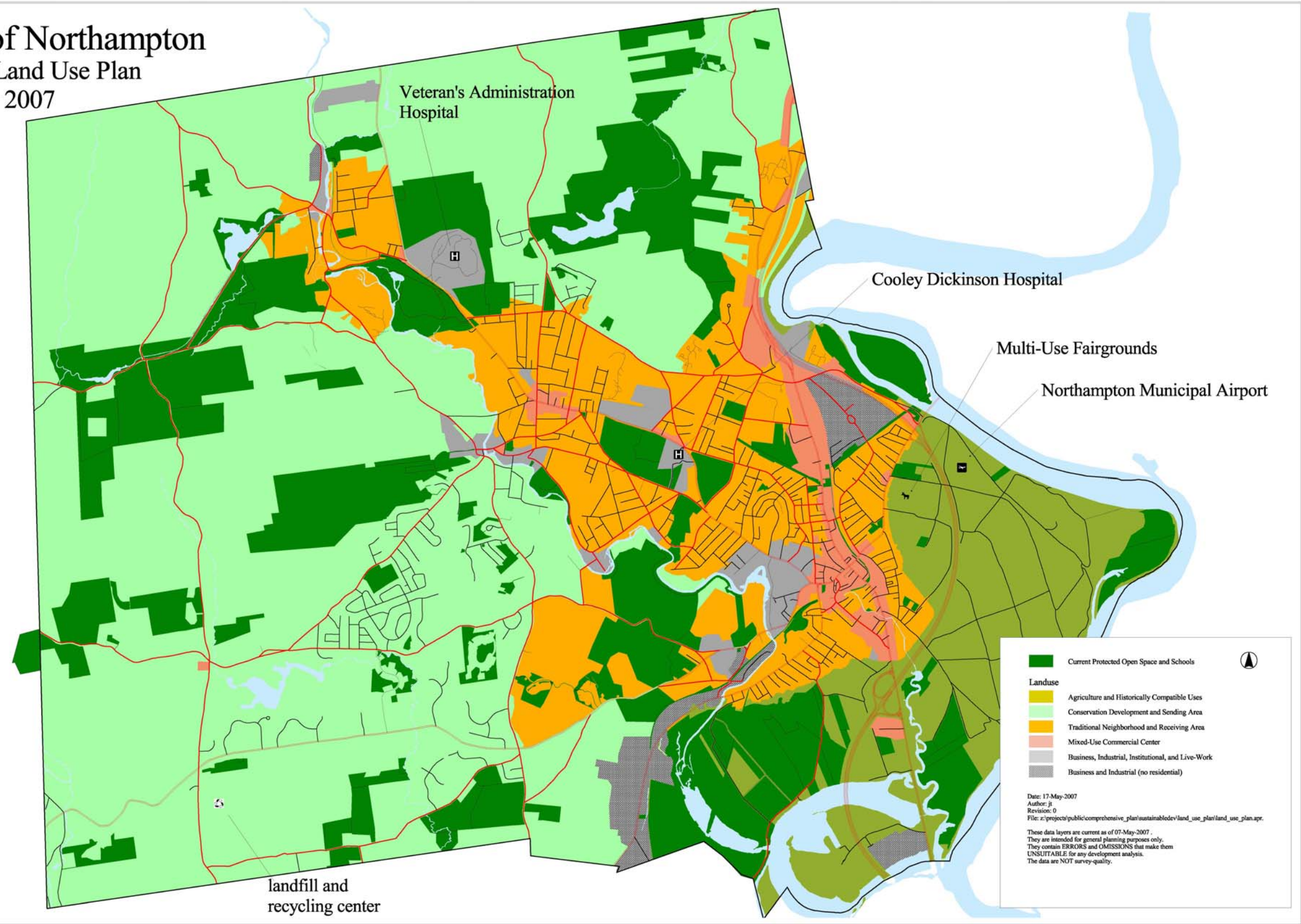
PLANNED LAND USE

A Future Land Use map is proposed to provide the City with a basis for making consistent decisions on capital investments and land use into the future. This map will be adopted and may be amended over time to ensure consistency and to provide a measurement of success in the completion of this plan. The plan is shown on the next page.

The Future Land Use Plan shows:

- Concentration of traditional development in the historically denser areas of Downtown, Florence and Leeds.
- Low-density development in the watersheds. This plan will allow transfer of development rights into the higher density areas.
- Expansion of land for commercial/economic development, including the business park.
- Areas for continued preservation of agriculture and related uses.

City of Northampton
Future Land Use Plan
17 May 2007



THE ELEMENTS, ACTIONS AND MEASURES OF SUCCESS

The following section includes the Goals, Objectives and Actions proposed to accomplish this Vision, followed by the Measurements of Progress that will determine how well the City succeeds in accomplishing the plan. The sections are separated into the thirteen elements identified in the public meetings; Land Use and Development, Environment, Open Space and Recreation, Energy and Climate Protection, Economic Development, Arts and Culture, Historic and Cultural Resources, Housing, Infrastructure and Capital Resources, Transportation, Municipal Governance and Financial Stability, Education, and Social Equity.

The elements include these sections:

- Goals – The summary idea that leads the line of thought
- Objectives – More specific ideals following the goal
- Actions – Steps that are to be taken, with the responsible party identified
- Measurements of Progress – These are the metrics to determine whether improvements are occurring, which can be made as the report card on the results of implementing the plan. The metrics include targets that may be short-term, or long-term but will be revisited every five years with updates of the plan.
- Potential Conflicts and Potential Responses – Identification of where the discussion may have to proceed to resolve the inevitable conflicts when using finite resources to act on multiple, community-wide programs.

LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

Goal LU-1: Direct growth in accordance with the Future Land Use Plan

Objectives:

1. Ask for creative designs and cluster developments that allow higher density to improve the yield of housing in the downtown and village centers. Use the downtown and more densely developed areas to build high and medium density housing (12 to 65 units/acre).
2. Encourage mixed-use development in both residential and commercial areas composed of a combination of residential units and businesses supporting neighborhood needs and services.
3. In and around downtown and in existing denser developed areas such as the village centers, encourage infill development of vacant and underutilized land, or areas that are currently zoned and targeted for development, such as the Business Park, before developing rural areas and after considering required green space.
4. Match the pace of new housing development with the capacities of public infrastructure, public safety, and school services to support the new populations.
5. Locate housing within walking distances along safe paths, or with bicycle access, to and from neighborhood commercial areas, parks and recreation, schools, and public transportation.
6. Modify zoning to better encourage mixed-use development and include incentives to encourage businesses of similar types to group into "character districts" along King Street.
7. Develop Florence center, Leeds, Bay State, Hospital Hill and satellite commercial areas with mixed uses that support local commercial needs and services.

Actions:

Adopt a Future Land Use Plan as an official document that guides all city departments in decisions regarding land use and development.

Responsibility: Planning Board, City Council

Adopt impact and performance standard regulations to limit housing development in the City's rural and low development areas (<one unit/half acre), where that development will stress municipal services and alter the character of the neighborhood.

Responsibility: Planning Board, City Council

Ask the Transportation Committee to review City land use policies and the land use plan against the City's transportation plan and consider the impacts of land use on the City's transportation system.

Responsibility: Transportation Committee, Office of Planning and Development

Use the Open Space and Recreation Plan recommendations to identify priority areas and resources that should be preserved.

Responsibility: Conservation Commission, Recreation Commission, Community Preservation Committee, Planning Board, Office of Planning and Development

Charge the Planning Board to create a rezoning committee comprised of Board members and other stakeholders and task it with rezoning the City to be consistent with Sustainable Northampton Land Use Plan.

Responsibility: Planning Board, City Council

Update TDR zoning to allow residential and commercial development transfers with land bank options and identify sending and receiving zones.

Responsibility: Planning Board, City Council, Economic Development, Office of Planning and Development

Increase density and change design and dimensional criteria in the zoning regulations to encourage conversion of commercial strips at the eastern edge of downtown to look more like the central business district and place a highway/auto-oriented commercial overlay and a separate traditional design overlay, as appropriate, on sections of King Street, north of North Street.

Responsibility: Planning Board, City Council, Economic Development, Office of Planning and Development

Provide an option for mediation in site plan reviews to address neighborhood concerns.

Responsibility: Planning Board, Office of Planning and Development, City Council, Economic Development

Measurement of Progress:

Land Use

Metric: Amount of development, by number of projects/building permits and floor space, corresponding to the use designations of the future Land Use Plan

Reporting: Building Department, Office of Planning and Development, Economic Development

Target: Conformance with the Future Land Use plan

Responsibility for Target: City Council, Planning Board, Economic Development

Conservation

Metric: Amount of open space preserved and conserved, by number of sites and area, corresponding to the use designations of the conceptual Land Use Plan

Reporting: Conservation Commission, Recreation Department, Office of Planning and Development

Target: Conformance with Future Land Use plan

Responsibility for Target: City Council, Conservation Commission, Planning Board

Reform Regulations

Metric: Number of regulations and revisions corresponding to the use designations of the Future Land Use plan (attached)

Reporting: Office of Planning and Development

Target: Conformance with Future Land Use plan

Responsibility for Target: City Council, Planning Board

Potential Conflict:

- People choose many different ways of living, including choices for large lots with private open space.

Potential Response:

- Encourage cluster development that provides quality open space and reduces the development footprint.

See also: Economic Development, Housing

Goal LU-2: Create and preserve high quality, built environments in the downtown and village centers

Objectives:

1. Add parks, greenspace and appropriate agriculture on city-owned land or on larger infill development parcels where possible to keep urban and village centers attractive.
2. Identify the major gateways into downtown and outline necessary improvements.
3. Encourage the preservation of historically or architecturally significant buildings.
4. Encourage and create incentives to enable desired development to occur in downtown and other more densely developed locations or in targeted growth zones.
5. Set comparable design and land use standards for all development types.
6. Ensure the downtown and village centers are universally accessible.

Actions:

Draft and adopt design criteria for roads, signage and landscape to enhance gateways to downtown and village centers to create a welcoming entry into each section of the City.

Responsibility: Planning Board, Board of Public Works, City Council, Tree Committee, Economic Development, Department of Public Works, Office of Planning and Development

Develop a public signage and wayfinding program that increases visibility of public road signs, and ensures private signs conform to downtown and village aesthetics and design criteria.

Responsibility: Planning Board, Board of Public Works, City Council, Economic Development, Department of Public Works, Office of Planning and Development

Add to the capital budget regular funding for more public benches, cigarette disposal receptacles, trash cans, restrooms, and garden spaces downtown and in village centers, so long as they are consistent with adopted streetscape plans. Ask for the participation of the local merchants and neighborhood residents in maintaining these facilities.

Responsibility: Board of Public Works, City Council, Department of Public Works

Define an area standard and criteria for required green/open space within the highest density commercial and village centers.

Responsibility: Planning Board, Tree Committee, City Council, Office of Planning and Development

Redesign Pulaski Park to be more aesthetically pleasing, provide recreation, and be user-friendly as a multimodal center.

Responsibility: Tree Committee, Board of Public Works, City Council, Department of Public Works, Recreation Department, Economic Development

Continue to increase the amount of public open space for community gardens, where the soils and microclimate are appropriate for gardening to eliminate waiting list/demand.

Responsibility: Planning Board, City Council, Recreation Department, Smith Vocational Board of Trustees, Conservation Commission, Community Preservation Committee

Continue to improve streetscape design standards for street trees and streetscape.

Responsibility: Tree Committee, Planning Board, Board of Public Works, Tree Committee, Office of Planning and Development

Review accessibility on all public streets and continue program to continue upgrade and conversion for universal accessibility.

Responsibility: Planning Board, Board of Public Works, Committee on Disabilities, Council on Aging, Tree Committee, Office of Planning and Development

Measurement of Progress:

Design Criteria and Standards

Metric: Maintenance and improvements to City's design guidelines

Reporting: Department of Public Works, Office of Planning and Development

Target: Regular updates

Responsibility for Target: Board of Public Works, Planning Board

Streetscape Improvements

Metric: Number, value and length of streetscape improvements following the design guidelines

Reporting: Department of Public Works, Office of Planning and Development

Target: 2% of yearly maintenance and capital budget for streetscape improvements

Responsibility for Target: City Council, Board of Public Works, Planning Board

Street Trees

7

Metric: Percent of public streets shaded by trees or length of streets planted with shade trees, at 30'-45' separation depending on species.

Reporting: Tree Committee, Department of Public Works

Target: 25 trees per year planted or replaced

Responsibility for Target: Tree Committee, Department of Public Works, in cooperation with any Business Improvement District

Goal LU-3: Enhance downtown's standing as a commercial, civic and cultural center of the region

Objectives:

1. Define and support a critical mass of retail, cultural, and office space.
2. Reinforce downtown as a regional city center with its continuation as a vibrant mix of commercial, civic and cultural uses.

Actions:

Complete a market survey to determine what businesses could support local needs for goods, services, and cultural activities. Use the results to discuss regional marketing approaches with the other communities and NGO's.

Responsibility: Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce

See also: Housing, Economic Development, and Arts and Culture

Measurement of Progress:

Metric: Progress on Actions under Housing, Economic Development, and Arts and Culture

Potential Conflict:

- Real estate and business market forces may not match the desire for certain mixes of uses.

Potential Response:

- Provide public incentives and public space improvements to attract desired businesses.

Goal LU-4: Maintain a distinction between rural areas, residential neighborhoods, and urban areas

Objectives:

13

1. Housing projects in rural areas should be cluster development types, leaving more open land, with designs that allow for housing choices.
2. Develop design guidelines for new development in all areas to maintain the distinctions and historic precedents that define those areas.
3. Encourage a density of construction concurrent with the existing density of development of the area in which it is proposed or consistent with desirable density in targeted growth zones, such as increasing density in downtown and village areas.
4. Preserve the character of rural areas through preservation of large undeveloped tracts, vistas, and farmland.
5. Ensure a wide variety of living options to allow market-based choices.
6. Implement ideas for maximizing density on small lots.
7. Preserve a diversity of housing types that define the historic development of the neighborhood.

Actions:

Where cluster ordinance does not provide the optimum designs, adopt revised cluster regulations as proposed in the City's 2003 Grow Smart process.

Responsibility: Planning Board, City Council, Office of Planning and Development

Add standards in the Zoning Ordinance that allow distinctive subdistricts within commercial and residential areas, such as differentiation of development along the stretch of King Street north of North Street and attached dwellings within single-family developments.

Responsibility: Planning Board, City Council, Economic Development, Office of Planning and Development

When offered for redevelopment, evaluate appropriate reuse of large institutional properties and consider redevelopment for mixed-use centers

Responsibility: Planning Board, City Council, Office of Planning and Development

See also: Open Space

Measurement of Progress:

Metric: Adoption of regulations and revisions corresponding to the use designations of the Future Land Use plan

Reporting: Office of Planning and Development

Target: Conformance with Future Land Use plan

Responsibility for Target: City Council, Planning Board, Economic Development for business zones

Goal LU-5: Preserve the attractiveness and vitality of residential neighborhoods in and around commercial areas

Objectives:

1. Ensure zoning and land use regulations encourage mixed-use, multi-family development projects that are in keeping with high quality design and a character that transitions into the surrounding neighborhood.
2. Determine locations where public infrastructure improvements; water, roads, and sewer, could be extended to encourage the appropriate types of housing.
3. Establish public policies that prioritize maintaining the public infrastructure in neighborhoods mixed with affordable housing.
4. Ensure that expansion of commercial parcels into residential areas coincides with road infrastructure improvements that enhances the value of the abutting residential uses and improves neighborhood character.

Actions:

Encourage neighborhood organizations and support their participation in the planning of their areas.

Responsibility: All City Departments

Complete a survey to identify the types of housing people want and provide information on the potential value of variety in housing designs.

Responsibility: Mayor, Office of Planning and Development

Measurement of Progress:

Metric: Number of infill housing projects

Reporting: Building Department, Office of Planning and Development

Target: Ten per year

Responsibility for Target: Undefined

Potential Conflicts:

- The need for infill and greater density of downtown development, including reuse of existing structures, lies in contrast to the desire of many people to live in single family homes with yards and nearby green space and to not have more development in their neighborhood.
- The need for the City's major employers to expand, but without negative impacts on neighborhoods and the environment.
- Increased property values are appreciated but not the increased property tax and decreased affordability that comes with increased value.
- Neighborhoods and/or individuals or businesses opposing affordable housing.

Potential Responses:

- Do not establish policies that restrict against a wide range of housing choices.
- Educate people on the costs and benefits of stopping further development.
- Establish design guidelines and performance standards that ensure a compatible mixing of land uses.
- Educate people on the income range definitions of eligibility of affordable housing and the need of a community of diverse economic levels.

Goal LU-6: Preserve and encourage agricultural uses in designated areas, such as the Meadows, Sugar Bush, and the orchards

Objectives:

1. Maintain the primarily open and agricultural nature of the Meadows, as it exists with no new residential lots and no significant increase in residential density.
2. Continue to allow flooding of the Meadows for restoration of the soils for farming, and preserve the floodplain storage capacity of the Meadows as a means to prevent other areas and neighborhoods from flooding.
3. Support the economic viability of farming within the City and preserving scenic, ecological, environmental benefits for the City as whole. The City should support farming through allocation of resources and infrastructure investments.
4. Encourage improvements to existing businesses in these targeted areas to maintain their viability and thereby reduce the potential for sale or conversion to alternative uses.
5. Ease regulatory burden on landowners in these targeted areas that wish to maintain or expand their homes or businesses.

Actions:

Obtain the assistance of the state agricultural schools to monitor soil conditions, and maintenance of prime agricultural soils.

Responsibility: Agriculture Commission, Mayor, Office of Planning and Development

Monitor the trends of farmland utilization and production and be ready to act when there is the need for public policy support.

Responsibility: Agriculture Commission, Planning Board, City Council, Office of Planning and Development

Work with Agriculture Commission to identify additional parcels of land for agriculture protection and agri-businesses.

Responsibility: Agriculture Commission, Planning Board, Economic Development, Office of Planning and Development

Measurement of Progress:

Metric: Acres of land classified in agricultural production, and yearly farm revenues

Reporting: Agriculture Commission, Office of Planning and Development

Target: Maintain farmland area and increase yearly revenues by 2%

Responsibility for Target: Open Space Committee, Planning, Community Preservation Committee to maintain farmland; City Council and Planning to approve expansion of agri-business; Economic Development and Chamber of Commerce to promote agri-tourism and provide business assistance

Potential Conflict:

- Agriculture is fading as a strong part of the regional economy and efforts to preserve it may be very difficult.

Potential Responses:

- Highlight farming as a quality of the area and thereby provide some marketing support.
- Allow diversification of farm activities to provide other business income.

Goal LU-7: Integrate energy efficiency and conservation into local land use planning

Objectives:

1. Encourage 'green' building construction for private development.
2. Adopt low impact design standards for construction sites.
3. Include natural systems on-site in appropriate new construction.
4. Integrate green building design into all types of housing.

Actions: See *Energy and Climate*

Measurement of Progress:

Low Impact Infrastructure

Metric: Number of infrastructure projects to retrofit for low impact standards

Reporting: Capital Improvements on public projects

Target: All public infrastructure projects to reduce impervious coverage, reduce stormwater runoff volumes, and increase stormwater quality

Responsibility for Target: Capital Improvements Commission, Board of Public Works, Central Services Department, Office of Planning and Development

Low Impact Development

8

Metric: Number of subdivisions meeting low impact standards; Number of green roofs in the urban areas; and the number of Low Impact Development projects in the peri-urban and low-density areas.

Reporting: Central Services Department, Conservation Commission and Planning Board from permit applications and approvals for private development

Target: Increase number of private developments encouraged to build green design projects.

Responsibility for Target: Central Services Department, Planning Board, Conservation Commission

See also: Energy and Climate

Goal LU-8: Encourage development in areas with the proper existing and planned infrastructure

Objectives:

1. Encourage development patterns similar to traditional Northampton neighborhoods, including pedestrian scales, connections to goods and services, and connections to multiple modes of travel.
2. Establish capital and infrastructure improvement programs that match with planned development areas.
3. Extend or provide infrastructure improvement projects to support development projects that meet City goals.
4. Promote a jobs-housing balance to reduce congestion.

18

Actions:

Identify areas to expand or apply State regulations 43D, 40R/40S Smart Growth Zoning and TDR close to downtown in conformance with the Future Land Use plan, and present for public review.

Responsibility: Planning Board, Office of Planning and Development

Develop a lot size policy based on population density, infrastructure, and desired development patterns.

Responsibility: Planning Board, City Council, Office of Planning and Development

Measurement of Progress:

Metric: Adoption of zoning corresponding to the use designations of the Future Land Use map

Reporting: Office of Planning and Development

Target: Conformance with Future Land Use plan

Responsibility for Target: City Council, Planning Board, Economic Development in business zones

Potential Conflicts:

- The need for infill and greater density of downtown development, including reuse of existing structures, in contrast to the desire of many people to live in single family homes with yards and nearby green space and to not have more development in their neighborhood.
- The desire for more businesses, jobs and diverse housing options at a range of affordability levels but new development can conflict with desire to keep open space, wildlife habitat and corridors, and agriculture.

Potential Responses:

- Create design guidelines that distinguish the special features about different neighborhoods and areas and apply them in ways that maintain those qualities.
- Establish development agreements that connect new infrastructure and mitigation with new development.

ENVIRONMENT

Goal EN-1: Protect valuable and sensitive ecological resources (land, air, water, habitat, species)

Objectives:

1. Prioritize and preserve quality wetlands by encouraging development in densely populated areas and in clusters.
2. Protect and conserve water supplies (drinking, surface, groundwater, recharge areas, aquifers) and continue to enforce groundwater protection regulations.
3. Maintain the primarily open and agricultural nature of the Meadows with no new residential lots and no significant increase in residential density.
4. Conserve wetlands with programs to ensure no net loss of total wetlands (existing area of approximately 3,000 acres).
5. Preserve floodplains for flood storage and, where appropriate, habitat values.
6. Preserve existing forests, floodplains, wetlands, and agricultural soils of high ecological value.
7. Protect rare and endangered plants and animals and important wildlife corridors.
8. Improve the quality and appearance of the public water supply.

9. Recognize that the protection of environmental resources will improve the quality of life and the value of property in the City.
10. Minimize the loss of tree canopy throughout the City and increase tree canopy in urbanized areas to maintain a higher quality environment in all areas.

Actions:

Adopt water conservation measures as part of the building and health codes of the City.

Responsibility: City Council, Health Department

Adopt the wetland boundaries as local regulatory boundaries and create regulations for preservation.

Responsibility: City Council, Conservation Commission

Select a management committee and task it with creation of a long-term use and conservation management plan for public land at the Meadows.

Responsibility: Mayor

Expand the street tree program by obtaining private funds and services as grants, mitigation, and exactions and using them to implement the public sector programs through design, construction, and maintenance.

Responsibility: Tree Committee, Department of Public Works,

Measurement of Progress:

Metric: Acreage and numbers of sites of land and natural resource conservation

Reporting: Conservation Commission, Office of Planning and Development

Target: 2% increase in area or number per year.

Responsibility for Target: Conservation Commission, City Council, Planning Board

See also: Energy and Climate

Goal EN-2: Minimize the impacts of infrastructure systems on environmental resources

Objectives:

1. Implement regulations that include measures for soil erosion and sediment control.
2. Encourage and enforce low impact development designs.
3. Develop an inventory of roadways and facilities in environmentally sensitive areas and reduce the use of sand, salts or other de-icing chemicals for their maintenance.
4. When utilized store road salt and de-icing chemicals in safe and environmentally sound locations and structures to prevent accidental pollution/contamination.
5. Include 'low impact' and NPDES drainage improvements concurrently with any pavement management program or project.
6. Reuse brownfield sites before using greenfields.
7. Continue to provide a means of conserving the supply of potable water for actual or anticipated shortages and when deemed necessary for health, welfare or safety.
8. Ensure City programs for improvement are equally distributed throughout all neighborhoods, consistent with need and cost.

Actions:

Convene a working group of the Conservation Commission, Tree Committee, Board of Public Works, and Planning Board, supported by the Public Works Department and Office of Planning and Development and task it with researching and determining improvements

to infrastructure for environmental benefits and related public and private costs for construction.

Responsibility: Mayor

Prepare a cost analysis of road sand and salt, including the clean-up costs of sand.

Responsibility: Department of Public Works

Measurement of Progress:

Metric: Number of public infrastructure projects to retrofit for low impact standards

Reporting: Capital Improvements

Target: All public infrastructure projects to reduce impervious coverage, reduce stormwater runoff volumes, and increase stormwater quality

Responsibility for Target: Capital Improvements, Board of Public Works, Planning Board, City Council

Goal EN-3: Safeguard and improve the quality of the City's surface waters to ensure their use for safe public swimming, recreational fishing activities, boating, and drinking

Objectives:

1. Ensure landside land alterations do not adversely impact surface waters.
2. Ensure waterfront businesses comply with regulations and upgrade environmental control equipment.
3. Ensure safe quality recreational waters are available to all residents.
4. Protect quality of backup drinking water supply located in City reservoir.

Actions:

Create a volunteer water quality monitoring group under the auspices of the Conservation Commission to monitor long-term trends of water quality changes.

Responsibility: Conservation Commission

Measurement of Progress:

Metric: Water quality

Reporting: Conservation Commission, Health Department, Department of Public Works

Target: Continuous improvement towards swimmable, fishable, and where necessary, drinking water standards

Responsibility for Target: Conservation Commission, Health Department, Board of Public Works, Planning Board

Goal EN-4: Reduce light pollution

Objectives:

1. Control the impact of light pollution in all new development projects.
2. Provide adequate but low impact lighting in business zones, the downtown and village centers.

Actions:

Ask for ideas from residents and business owners and determine whether they are appropriate for adoption by the city.

Responsibility: Office of Planning and Development, Economic Development

Enforce the Dark Sky Ordinance

Responsibility: Police Department

Ask the electric utility company what may be available for financial and design assistance as part of local conservation efforts

Responsibility: Mayor, Board of Public Works, Office of Planning and Development, Economic Development

Provide list of lighting options for public and private projects

Responsibility: Department of Public Works, Central Services Department

Measurement of Progress:

Metric: Number of lighting systems built to reduce light trespass

Reporting: Central Services Department, Office of Planning and Development

Target: All new projects to include lighting control design

Responsibility for Target: Central Services Department, Planning Board

Potential Conflict:

- The conflict between lifestyles/current habits of property owners and the emerging cost and uncertainty of energy supply will need to be explored.

Potential Response:

- New technologies are being rapidly developed and could address these conflicts.

Goal EN-5: Develop strategies to protect the City from the impacts of natural hazards.

Objectives:

1. Site new development outside of high hazard natural areas, such as floodways.
2. Reduce the public costs of infrastructure maintenance in high hazard areas.
3. Consistently apply strategies to all neighborhoods and areas.
4. Encourage passive survivability standards of new structures to increase survival of natural disasters for all public and private buildings.

Actions:

Expand the City's Emergency Response Plan to include review of high hazard areas and recommendations to reduce exposure with alterations in land use patterns and infrastructure projects.

Responsibility: All City Departments

Publicize the City's Emergency Response Plan.

Responsibility: All City Departments

Apply for funds to implement the City's Emergency Response Plan.

Responsibility: Emergency Preparedness

Measurement of Progress:

Metric: Number of people aware of the Emergency Response Plan

Reporting: Emergency Preparedness

Target: All householders and head of households

Responsibility for Target: Emergency Preparedness

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

11

Goal OS-1: Maximize use of the City's open space and recreation areas

Objectives:

1. Determine carrying capacity of facilities matched with population growth and demographics.
2. Maximize use of recreational space with affordable and quality programs for youth.
3. Make capital improvements and improve maintenance of recreation facilities.
4. Provide open space and recreation opportunities for individuals of all ages, socioeconomic levels and physical abilities now and for future generations.

Actions:

Using the inventory included in the Open Space and Recreation Plan, define the current usage and estimate carrying capacity based on resource quality and impacts. Maximize the potential use by advertising availability.

Responsibility: Recreation Commission, Recreation Department, School Committee, School Department

Measurement of Progress:

Metric: Number of visitors to City open space and recreation areas

Reporting: Recreation Department

Target: Match carrying capacity with use

Responsibility for Target: Mayor, Recreation Commission, City Council, Board of Public Works

Goal OS-2: Expand open space and recreation areas

Objectives:

1. Acquire land for recreation, conservation and open space needs, preservation of plant and animal habitat, protection of scenic vistas, public enjoyment, and to enhance the character and sustainability of the community.
2. Preserve and expand City holdings of open space and wild lands, and open land in developed areas, including densely developed areas.
3. Use open space and recreation to ensure that the urban and village centers are attractive places to live, work, and visit.
4. Make more natural areas available for public use.

Actions:

Implement the Open Space and Recreation Plan recommendations for expansion of spaces and facilities.

Responsibility: Community Preservation Committee, Recreation Commission

Measurement of Progress:

Metric: Amount of land/facilities available for open space and recreation

Reporting: Recreation Department, Office of Planning and Development

Target: 5% increase per year in area and number of facilities

Responsibility for Target: Mayor, Community Preservation Committee, Recreation Commission, City Council,

Goal OS-3: Preserve natural and cultural resources and the environment

Objectives:

1. Preserve the character of rural areas, farms, forests, and rivers.
2. Manage conservation properties to restore plant and animal habitats.
3. Preserve the environment and cultural and natural resources through land and easements and regulation changes.
4. Protect important ecological resources, including surface and groundwater resources, plant communities, and wildlife habitat.
5. Preserve ecological linkages and wildlife corridors, especially water-based linkages.
6. Have the City take a lead in protecting architectural and cultural history.
7. Consistently apply the criteria for preservation of the environment and resources across all neighborhoods and areas.

Actions:

Continue to use acquisition, less-than-fee-simple ownership, and easements to preserve resources.

Responsibility: Community Preservation Committee, Conservation Commission, Office of Planning and Development

Measurement of Progress:

Metric: Number of buildings and properties preserved

Reporting: Open Space Committee, Conservation Commission, Office of Planning and Development

Target: Two areas each year

Responsibility for Target: Community Preservation Committee, Recreation Commission, Conservation Commission, Planning Board

Goal OS-4: Provide open space connections between public spaces

Objectives:

1. Identify 'greenway' and 'blueway' connections that could provide pedestrian, bicycle, and boat access between open space areas.
2. Use the connections to also link with business areas where they can support the pedestrian/biking connections.
3. Improve connections to open spaces for all individuals so they are universally accessible.

Actions:

Create a Green Links plan - Map out potential connections between open space areas and other public properties. Set priorities for incremental improvement of the connections.

Responsibility: Mayor, City Council, Board of Public Works, Conservation Commission, Planning Board, Office of Planning and Development

Measurement of Progress:

Metric: New walking and biking links between open spaces and public properties, between neighborhoods and schools and village centers

Reporting: Department of Public Works, Recreation Department, Office of Planning and Development

Target: One thousand feet of new links identified or built each year

Responsibility for Target: Capital Improvement Committee, Board of Public Works, Planning Board

ENERGY AND CLIMATE PROTECTION

Goal EC-1: Reduce community's and City's energy demand and natural resource consumption

Objectives:

1. Encourage reuse and rehabilitation of existing buildings.
2. Ensure that large-scale development of "greenfield" sites be "green" development with minimal impact on natural or energy resources.
- 1 3. Facilitate the development and construction of "green" [e.g. LEED™ certified] new municipal buildings with the goal that *all* new buildings include these criteria – such as the Senior Center.
4. Incorporate green building standards into the rehabilitation process for municipal buildings.
5. Make City recycling efforts should be a model for the private sector.
6. Increase recycling from multi-family homes.
- 3A 7. Facilitate the increased energy efficiency and use of renewable energy in public and private buildings
8. Reduce citywide single-use disposable items.
9. Increase utilization of energy from renewable sources and reduce utilization of energy provided from limited resources, such as oil.
10. Do not transfer burden of the City's higher energy costs onto people who can least afford it.
11. Emphasize restoration and preservation of existing housing and building stock to incorporate up-to-date energy standards.
12. Increase recycling in waste streams from city buildings and schools, including composting, and establish a high standard for the private sector to follow.
13. Promote a "buy local" policy and public campaign.

Actions:

Reconstitute and revitalize a new Energy Resources Commission. This Commission should have the ability to collect data, proactively examine alternative, renewable, and sustainable energy options (i.e. solar power, vegetable oil and biodiesel options, methane digester power, landfill gas generation, and hydropower from the Connecticut and Mill rivers), implement the energy goals of this plan and, coordinated with the Energy Officer, coordinate community education efforts.

Responsibility: Mayor

Building Standards

3B Prepare and implement an energy conservation plan for the City as a means of providing a resource guide on simple energy-saving measures. Ask the utility companies to assist.

Responsibility: Energy Resources Commission, Board of Public Works, School Committee, Energy Officer

Include line items in the capital program for replacement of old technologies with newer, cleaner, and more efficient ones.

Responsibility: Mayor, Board of Public Works, Capital Improvement Committee, City Council, Energy Resources Commission,

Adopt a standard that all new City buildings will meet LEED™ certification standards. The base standard will be LEED™ Silver; the goal will be LEED™ Gold.

Responsibility: Mayor, Central Services Department, School Committee, Board of Public Works, Capital Improvement Committee, City Council, Energy Resources Commission, Energy Officer

Make new school projects match high sustainability standards; currently CHPS - Collaborative for High-Performance Schools

Responsibility: Mayor, School Committee, Capital Improvement Committee, Central Services Department, City Council, Energy Resources Commission, Energy Officer

Complete a structural review of the city's buildings to determine viability of retrofitting them with green roofs.

Responsibility: Central Services Department, Department of Public Works, School Department, Library Department

Request Energy Star, LEED, or equivalent approaches to design of private development projects.

Responsibility: Planning Board

Measurement of Progress:

Green Buildings

Metric: Number of buildings built under green design standards

2

Reporting: Energy Resources Commission, Capital Improvement Committee, Central Services Department, Energy Officer

Target: All new building and renovation projects to follow a minimum of Silver LEED standard

5

Responsibility for Target: Central Services Department, Energy Resources Commission, Mayor, City Council, Capital Improvement Committee, and any department sponsoring a new building.

Green Roofs

Metric: Number of buildings with green roofs

Reporting: Energy Resources Commission, Capital Improvement Committee, Central Services Department, Energy Officer

Target: All new building and renovation projects to consider green roofs

Responsibility for Target: City Council, Central Services, Energy Resources Commission, and Economic Development and Planning Board for private projects

For Building Performance and Incentives, see EC-2

Goal EC-2: Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases

Objectives:

1. Encourage uses that generate automobile traffic to undertake Travel Demand Management [TDM].
2. Develop practices to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and increase energy efficiency in municipal operations.
3. Develop an energy descent plan.
4. Improve energy and transportation efficiency in City travel.
5. Encourage private businesses to utilize energy more efficiently.
6. Raise awareness of global climate change and the sources of climate changing gases.
7. Minimize the loss of tree canopy throughout the City and increase tree canopy in urbanized areas to maintain a higher quality environment in all areas.
8. Follow the Future Land Use plan to ensure efficient use of land and reduced vehicle traffic

Actions:

Audits and Inventories

Update energy audits and operations audits of all public buildings to list all energy saving measures.

Responsibility: Energy Resources Commission, Central Services Department, Energy Officer, Capital Improvement Committee, Department of Public Works, School Department

Update the ICLEI inventory for climate protection and prepare and implement a plan for climate protection.

Responsibility: Energy Resources Commission, All City Departments

Monitor The Climate Registry to determine statewide compliance.

Responsibility: Energy Resources Commission, Energy Officer

Operations

Review maintenance and operation procedures covering vehicle and facility use against energy saving options in each department.

Responsibility: All City Departments

Consolidate use of public buildings, including schools, to save energy for evening meetings and programs.

Responsibility: Central Services, All other City Departments

Institute travel demand management for City employees to reduce the number of single occupancy trips.

Responsibility: All City Departments

Install integrated energy management systems for all public buildings.

Responsibility: Capital Improvement Committee, Central Services Department, Energy Officer, School Department, Library Department

Include lease provisions for energy program compliance for private users of all public buildings.

Responsibility: Central Services, City Council, Board of Public Works, School Department

Increase participation in composting programs through:

- A public education program;
- Improved 'user-friendly' management of compost facilities.

Responsibility: Department of Public Works

Consider ISO 14001 Certification for the City.

Responsibility: Mayor, Central Services Department, Energy Officer, Energy Resources Commission

Life Cycle Analysis and Monitoring

Include a Life Cycle Analysis in all public building projects.

Responsibility: Capital Improvement Committee, Central Services Department, Department of Public Works, School Department, Library Department

Develop a monitoring program for environmental performance in public facilities.

Responsibility: Energy Resources Commission, Capital Improvement Committee, Central Services Department, School Department, Library Department

Develop a monitoring program for environmental performance in private facilities.

Responsibility: Energy Resources Commission

Develop a monitoring program for waste generation and disposal from City operations.

Responsibility: Department of Public Works, School Department

Improvements

Add climate control standards in the street tree and City open space programs.

Responsibility: Tree Committee, Department of Public Works

Create a program to expand public forests for sequestering carbon.

Responsibility: Tree Committee, Department of Public Works

Present a report for public review that identifies where, as allowed by state law, the City land use ordinances could further address greenhouse gas emissions, and identify the local costs in implementation.

Responsibility: Energy Resources Commission, Energy Officer, Office of Planning And Development

Incentives

Prepare an incentive program that enables increased energy efficiency and use of renewable energy of existing buildings, such as Cambridge, MA, and present for public review.

Responsibility: Mayor, Energy Resources Commission, Capital Improvement Committee

Create an awards program for improvements in energy efficiency for both City agencies and private sector development.

Responsibility: Mayor, Energy Resources Commission, Energy Officer

Provide incentives [bonuses and waivers] in the land use regulations for new construction to meet high efficiency standards.

Responsibility: Planning Board, City Council, Office of Planning and Development

Measurement of Progress:

Total Energy Demand

Metric: Trend in total energy demand from City facilities

Reporting: City Treasurer, Energy Officer, payments on energy bills

Target: 2% reduction per year

Responsibility for Target: Central Services, Energy Resources Commission, School Department, Energy Officer

Renewable Energy Use

Metric: Percent of energy supplied by renewable sources

Reporting: City Treasurer, payments on energy bills

Target: 25% in ten years

Responsibility for Target: Mayor, City Council, Central Services, Energy Resources Commission

Monitoring

Metric: Match comparative performance standards from ICLEI, The Climate Registry, and others

Reporting: Energy Officer, Office of Planning and Development

Target: Lead in local climate protection efforts

Responsibility for Target: All City Departments

Recycling

Metric: Amount in percent and tonnage of waste recycled

Reporting: Department of Public Works

Target: 75% in ten years

Responsibility for Target: Board of Public Works

Potential Conflicts:

- There is widespread support for energy conservation, but little in the way of tangible plans to make it happen.
- The conflict between lifestyles/current habits of property owners and the emerging cost and uncertainty of energy supply will need to be explored.

Potential Response:

- The recognition of costs associated with energy supplies will encourage modification of energy utilization.
- New technologies are being rapidly developed and could address these conflicts.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goal ED-1: Ensure vibrant and distinctive downtown and village centers

Objectives:

1. Encourage business and job growth in urban and commercial/industrial centers (e.g., downtown, village centers, and targeted commercial and industrial zones).
2. Expand access to goods and services in the City with new businesses, new business models, and expansion of existing businesses.
3. Encourage economic expansion, job creation and job stability, including locally grown businesses.
4. Provide adequate parking and transportation options to enable successful visits to these centers.

5. Preserve/enhance the public services and amenities that draw people to downtown that are safe and pedestrian friendly, and welcoming to the diversity of Northampton residents.

Actions:

Use available redevelopment parcels to create a range of projects (e.g., Northampton State Hospital, Rt. 10 Business Park, King Street) and attract multiple developers.

Responsibility: Economic Development, Planning Board, Office of Planning and Development

Support infill development in downtown and commercial/industrial zones:

- Provide regulations and financial incentives that would encourage conversion of public and private surface parking lots to mixed development with parking structures,
- Allow taller structures [>five stories];
- Encourage or require shared parking to meet zoning requirements.

Responsibility: Planning Board, Office of Planning and Development, Economic Development

Update and expand the Urban Renewal Plan to authorize the Northampton Redevelopment Authority or other public development entity to undertake development projects in targeted industrial and commercial areas including but not limited to King Street, the Rt. 10 Business Park, and downtown

Responsibility: Mayor, Economic Development, City Council, Office of Planning and Development

Complete the parking, road and transit improvements in areas identified for commercial and mixed- use growth in the Future Land Use plan and the city's economic development plans.

Responsibility: Mayor, Economic Development, City Council, Public Works, Transportation and Parking, Office of Planning and Development

Measurement of Progress:

Jobs

Metric: Number of jobs with living wages associated with commercial development and city/village centers

Reporting: Economic Development, Office of Planning and Development

Target: Increase in jobs with wages matching local living standards

Responsibility for Target: Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce, Local businesses

Commercial Activity

Metric: Building permits issued for new commercial development consistent with the Future Land Use plan

Reporting: Building Department, Office of Planning and Development

Target: Increase in commercial activity commensurate with regional economic growth

Responsibility for Target: Planning Board, Economic Development

Goal ED-2: Provide long-term economic sustainability, security, and opportunity

Objectives:

1. Expand the commercial and industrial land inventory.
2. Encourage and support sustainable business development practices.
3. Encourage a versatile, diverse, and sustainable business and employment base.
4. Improve and stabilize the tax base with diverse and profitable businesses.
5. Increase micro-business training and technical assistance.
6. Encourage business development for job creation and retention, with living wages.
7. Expand the non-residential tax base
8. Encourage State placement of regional facilities, such as district courts, to be placed in the City.

Actions:

Trend analysis:

Maintain a record of retail trends in the City:

- Collect reliable retail sales trend data for city and region;
- Request the realtors association provide reliable turnover, vacancy and rental rate trend data.

Responsibility: Economic Development

Determine how rental rates impact business decisions for start-ups and locating in Northampton.

Responsibility: Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce

Report information and trends regarding social problems affecting business in Downtown and Florence; particularly panhandling and drug use, and act accordingly.

Responsibility: Police Department, Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce

Sector support:

Organize a summit with local and regional business representatives to develop a strategy for retail market share.

Responsibility: Mayor, Chamber of Commerce

Support cleanup and redevelopment of brownfields sites and underutilized commercial/ industrial buildings including, Wire Works, Magnat, Cutlery, Pro Corp., Hill & Dale Mall, and Three County Fairground.

Responsibility: Mayor, City Council, Planning Board, Economic Development, brownfield property owners

Determine the ways and means to reinvigorate the manufacturing base – both traditional (plastics, machining) and higher technology. Determine what regional and statewide resources can be used to support manufacturing.

Responsibility: Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce

Provide public policy and funding support to the key existing and emerging industry sectors with growth potential that build on Northampton's strengths including, publishing, software, medical/science/bio technology, advanced technology manufacturing, creative economy, green businesses, and tourism/retail.

Responsibility: Mayor, Chamber of Commerce, City Council, Planning Board, Economic Development

Convene a committee of artists, farmers and chamber of commerce representatives to investigate the feasibility and needs for a year-round public market for local products – agricultural, crafts, etc. [See Arts and Culture]

Responsibility: Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce

Use the Capital Improvement program to specify the plan for building public infrastructure needed to support business development in areas targeted for business growth (broadband, sewer, water, drainage, transit, roadway, and parking).

Responsibility: Economic Development, Mayor, Capital Improvement Committee, Board of Public Works

Institutions and non-profits:

Create business and educational collaborations and support innovation and technology transfer/ commercialization to grow local businesses and to retain creativity, entrepreneurship, and educated workforce from colleges and vocational schools in the region.

Responsibility: Economic Development, Schools, Local Institutions

Create collaborations with colleges to market Northampton as an attractive place to locate alumni businesses.

Responsibility: Economic Development, Schools, Local Institutions, Chamber of Commerce

Support institutional and non-profit businesses that are major employers, provide livable wages, provide important public benefit, and act as a catalyst for secondary economic activity (e.g., education, health care, Fairgrounds, and cultural organizations).

Responsibility: Economic Development, Schools, Institutions, Chamber of Commerce, Office of Planning and Development

Sustainable businesses:

Convene a working group of local and regional business representatives and the City to create and provide recommendations for model sustainable business practices as a resource for the business community.

Responsibility: Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce, City Council, Planning Board

Support business development that enhances the environmental and long-term sustainability of the community including, agriculture and other land-based business, green business, and energy efficient design.

Responsibility: Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce, City Council, Planning Board, Energy Officer

Balance local/regional trade with export trade to generate new wealth coming into the community and to circulate and equitably share wealth within the community.

Responsibility: Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce, Local businesses

Support entrepreneurship with business and financial assistance and targeted financial incentives where appropriate.

Responsibility: Economic Development, Mayor, City Council

Focus on business development that supports job creation, job opportunities, and higher than average wages for all Northampton residents.

Responsibility: Economic Development, City Council, Planning Board

Training:

Provide entrepreneurial training and start-up business assistance for low-income and limited English speaking residents.

Responsibility: Chamber of Commerce, School Department, Adult Basic Education (ABE) Programs, Regional Employment Board, Valley Community Development Corporation

Support workforce development and training that is responsive to industry and worker trends and needs to ensure competitiveness in the regional and global economy, economic security/adaptability under changing economic conditions, career advancement, and secure standard of living/living wages.

Responsibility: Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce, School Department, Institutions, Regional Employment Board

Encourage and support locally owned and operated businesses and buy local campaigns.

Responsibility: Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce

Address ESL, literacy, adult basic education, and social equity needs of the workforce especially immigrant workers.

Responsibility: Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce, School Department, Institutions, ABE Programs, Regional Employment Board

Create jobs and job training opportunities for youth and unemployed/under-employed workers.

Responsibility: Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce, School Department, Institutions, Regional Employment Board

Provide community job-training programs for unemployed and underemployed.

Responsibility: Chamber of Commerce, School Department, Institutions

Marketing:

Develop a mechanism to support downtown management, marketing, and maintenance (e.g., Business Improvement District, marketing revenue sources, etc.).

Responsibility: Chamber of Commerce, Mayor, Economic Development, City Council, downtown businesses and property owners

Develop a marketing campaign to attract compatible and desirable businesses, increase visibility in regional and national markets.

Responsibility: Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development

Measurement of Progress:

Tax Base

Metric: Increase in the tax base

Reporting: Finance Director, Mayor, Economic Development

Target: Yearly increases up to 2.5% plus new growth, as permitted by State law.

Responsibility for Target: Mayor, City Council, Finance Director, Economic Development

Business Activity

Metric: Number of businesses; Number of jobs and wages; Turnover rate for local businesses

Reporting: Economic Development, State and Federal database

Target: Increase values of businesses by number of jobs, wages and property valuation

Responsibility for Target: Local businesses, Economic Development

Training Activity

Metric: Number of individuals enrolled and graduating in business and job training programs courses or assistance programs

Reporting: Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce, School Department, Local Institutions

Target: Increase commensurate with regional economic growth

Responsibility for Target: Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce, School Committee, Institutions, Regional Employment Board

Goal ED-3: Support a thriving cultural and creative economy

Objectives:

1. Provide the spaces and locations in civic and social centers to allow the creative economy to thrive.
2. Develop cross connections between various sectors within the creative economy, such as artists, designers, and new technologies, to strengthen the overall vitality.
3. Facilitate greater communication and collaboration among cultural organizations, artists, the business community, non-profit organizations and City government.
4. Increase the availability of affordable studio, live-work, performance, and rehearsal space to retain artists, cultural organizations, and businesses in Northampton.

Actions:

Preserve and develop affordable arts and performance venues in the City by:

- Identifying venues and facilities and decide on their long-term viability.
- Survey local artists to determine demand and ability to pay for spaces.
- Create a list of possible venues and promote as part of downtown redevelopment projects.

Responsibility: Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development, Arts Council, Arts Organizations, property owners

Research what other communities have been able to achieve to create affordable live/work and studio space.

Responsibility: Chamber of Commerce, Office of Planning and Development

Link creative businesses to business and financial assistance programs.

Responsibility: Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development, Valley Community Development Corporation

Request joint marketing campaigns between cultural, retail, and hospitality sectors.

Responsibility: Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development

Coordinate fundraising by non-profit cultural organizations to businesses.

Responsibility: Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development, Non-profits

Preserve and enhance arts education programs in public schools.

Responsibility: School Committee, School Department, Arts Council

Measurement of Progress:

Metric: Progress on Arts and Culture

See also: Arts and Culture

Goal ED-4: Provide a positive business environment

Objectives:

1. Invest in infrastructure to support desired business development in areas targeted for business growth (e.g., broadband technology, sewer, water, drainage, roadway, parking, and transit).
2. Maintain an appropriate level of environmental and community protection while balancing the impacts of regulation on businesses and the economic health of the community.
3. Provide a streamlined and transparent permitting process.
4. Support a strong partnership with the Northampton Chamber of Commerce, Village business associations and other regional groups to brand Northampton as a positive business environment.
5. Create a competitive business opportunity in the City to enable business investment to occur for all levels of businesses, from start-up to corporation.
6. Foster communication and understanding between businesses, government, and residential uses; and recognize business as an integral part of a sustainable community.

Actions:

Convene a group of business owners, developers and city officials, and stakeholders to facilitate problem solving, and make recommendations for permit streamlining, regulatory simplification, and a customer service approach. Investigate adoption of State Expedited Local Permitting Law, chapter 43D.

Responsibility: Mayor, Economic Development, Planning Board

Complete an analysis that assesses consistency and balance between City policies in relation to economic development goals, other City goals, and financial health of the City including regulations, taxes, fees.

Responsibility: Mayor, Finance Director, Economic Development, All City Departments

Prepare an evaluation on the impact of permit/other fees in retaining and attracting businesses as compared to other communities and in relationship to development achieved.

Responsibility: Mayor, Finance Director, Economic Development Office, Office of Planning and Development

Develop a public program that recommends ways to provide incentives to attract and sustain businesses of all sizes.

Responsibility: Mayor, Economic Development Office, Planning Board, Office of Planning and Development

Promote Northampton as a regional economic and cultural hub and destination.

Responsibility: Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Office

Provide funding for marketing based on the return in finding and attracting new businesses.

Responsibility: Mayor, City Council, Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Office

Participate in the Northeast University economic development self-assessment tool.

Responsibility: Mayor, Economic Development, Planning, Chamber of Commerce, other departments as necessary.

Measurement of Progress:

Metric: Business/client satisfaction in dealing with City

Reporting: All City Departments, Chamber of Commerce

Target: Improved relationships as determined by 'customer' satisfaction

Responsibility for Target: All City Departments, Chamber of Commerce

Goal ED-5: Provide leadership for local and regional collaborations

Objectives:

1. Support regional coordination and collaboration in land use planning, economic development, transportation, smart growth, and creative municipal cost/revenue sharing.
2. Serve as a leader in advancing sustainable policies and practices to other communities.
3. Continue and expand regional economic development collaborations to leverage strengths and effectiveness; i.e. Pioneer Valley Connect, Plan for Progress, Economic Development Partners.
4. Include leadership from groups supporting social/cultural diversity.

Actions:

Through the Mayor's office, establish regular meetings with other communities in the region to seek out potential collaborations that support public policies.

Responsibility: Mayor

Measurement of Progress:

Regional Impact

Metric: Number of decisions including regional impact assessment

Reporting: Capital program report by City Council; Land use report by Planning

Target: All decisions consider regional impact

Responsibility for Target: Mayor, City Council

Regional Agreements

Metric: Number of agreements being upheld and enforced

Reporting: Mayor's office

Target: Undefined

Responsibility for Target: Undefined

Goal ED-6: Maintain the quality of life that is a strength and competitive advantage

Objectives:

1. Continue to ensure concentrated development patterns, open space protection, recreational resources, and protection of natural beauty and environmental quality.
2. Continue to ensure quality arts, cultural, historic, and educational resources as a vital part of the community and as integral to Northampton's distinctive character.

3. Facilitate economic development that contributes to a sense of community and long-term sustainability.
4. Foster a tolerant, inclusive, civic-minded populace that embraces diversity.
5. Celebrate the City with fairs, marches and other civic/social events.

Actions:

Draft language for all marketing materials that highlights the high quality of assets in the City.

Responsibility: Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce

Measurement of Progress:

Maintaining Quality of Life

Metric: Number of actions and conditions conforming to the improvements recommended in this comprehensive plan

Reporting: All City Departments

Target: Conformance with this comprehensive plan

Responsibility for Target: Citywide

Market Responses

Metric: Market responses

Reporting: Economic Development

Target: Successes from outreach and retention efforts

Responsibility for Target: Economic Development

Goal ED-7: Provide appropriate bicycle and vehicle parking to support local businesses
Objectives:

1. Create additional spaces to meet current and future anticipated parking demands for vehicles and bicycles while also applying demand management solutions for better utilization.
2. Utilize strategies to minimize parking demand and maximize alternative transportation.
3. Develop parking structures or decks north of Main St. to meet parking needs.
8. Improve the operation of parking in the downtown and village centers.
4. Ensure reasonable access to businesses and services is available to all residents and visitors.

See also: Transportation

Actions:

Bike Parking:

Install bicycle racks to provide all needed bicycle parking in public high bicycle traffic areas, including schools, downtown Florence, downtown Northampton, and the Village at Hospital Hill, to the extent grant-funded racks are available. Bicycle parking should be located close to building entrances and final destinations.

Responsibility: Transportation and Parking, Department of Public Works, Planning Board

Require that private developers provide bicycle parking at entrances and destinations to encourage bicycle travel.

Responsibility: Planning Board

Develop a policy of when all-weather bicycle storage is appropriate and for public sites in the downtown and transit stops, include all-weather and theft resistant bicycle storage where appropriate.

Responsibility: Transportation and Parking, Board of Public Works, Planning Board

Obtain funds and install bicycle lockers and improve utilization of existing bicycle lockers.

Responsibility: Transportation and Parking, Board of Public Works, Planning Board, Office of Planning and Development

Vehicle Parking:

Implement the recommendations of the Central Business District Parking Needs Study for parking demand mitigation, parking supply optimization, and parking supply shortfall.

Responsibility: Transportation and Parking, Parking Manager, Board of Public Works, Planning Board

Maximize the utilization of existing parking facilities, such as providing real-time signage, and identify measures to reduce the need for new parking facilities, such as shared parking and alternative access, while still encouraging the public to come downtown by increasing the ease of accessibility.

Responsibility: Transportation and Parking, Parking Manager, Board of Public Works, Planning Board

Explore the development of a additional structured parking facilities downtown (deck or garage) to address parking shortfalls and allow visitors and residents to park in a centralized facility as a smart growth alternative to commercial and residential sprawl and to minimize traffic congestion and CO2 emissions from circulating vehicles seeking parking spaces. Consider the structure as part of a multi-modal transportation facility.

Responsibility: Mayor, City Council, Chamber of Commerce, Transportation and Parking, Parking Manager, Economic Development, Board of Public Works, Planning Board

Ensure that on-street parking spaces in commercial areas are not eliminated to meet street improvements without a detailed alternatives assessment and a full community discussion.

Responsibility: Transportation and Parking, Parking Manager, Board of Public Works, Planning Board

Measurement of Progress:

Bicycle Parking

Metric: Number of bike facilities/per capita

12

Reporting: Department of Public Works, Office of Planning and Development

Target: Maximization of bicycle parking

Responsibility for Target: Board of Public Works, Planning Board

Vehicle Parking

Metric: Parking revenues by hourly and daily use and parking demand

Reporting: Transportation and Parking, Parking Manager

Target: Maximization of vehicle parking, Increase parking spaces when parking hits 95% utilization during peak hours

Responsibility for Target: Transportation and Parking, Parking Manager

Potential Conflicts:

- Commercial rents continue to rise, which attracts investment, but many spaces are no longer affordable to local businesses.
- The need to attract and retain a diversity of employers, especially industrial employers, vs. the price of industrial space, and regulatory issues, which make it difficult to do so.
- The need for the City's major employers to expand, but without negative impacts on neighborhoods and the environment.
- Appreciation for a vibrant downtown but concern about manifestation of problems, i.e. traffic, parking, and panhandling, and more global issues of homelessness and drug use.
- Desire for more commercial development on King Street but differing opinions on how development should take place, i.e. pedestrian or auto oriented design/uses, mixed residential/commercial or strictly commercial.
- Desire for a broad range of products, services, pricing and a desire to have primarily local businesses.
- Perceived as a vibrant economy yet insufficient good paying jobs are causing people to live or work elsewhere.
- Environmental protection and climate change goals seek a reduction in vehicle use and travel which may be encouraged with better parking options that support economic development.
- The desire for major employers to expand without negative impacts on neighborhoods and the environment is noble, but may be hard to achieve in a realistic manner.

Potential Responses:

- Providing a positive business environment [ED-4].
- Providing the regional leadership [ED-5].
- Maintaining the public properties and policies that support businesses [ED-6].

ARTS AND CULTURE

Goal AC-1: Provide quality arts and cultural resources as a vital part of the community

Objectives:

1. Expand the presence of public art in desired locations.
2. Encourage the City's cultural community to collaborate in order to provide cultural leadership on behalf of artists, cultural organizations, and the community.
3. Maintain direct municipal support for the arts, and cultural organizations and facilities including the Arts Council, the Academy of Music and the Center for the Arts.
4. Build on partnerships with Smith College, and other non-profit organizations, to increase arts and cultural opportunities, resources and collaboration.
5. Enable arts instruction/enrichment to be valued as an integral part of every child's education in the public school system.

Actions:

Create a community arts bulletin board/website.

Responsibility: Arts Community, Arts Council, Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce

Create comprehensive inventory of arts organizations, businesses, and venues.

Responsibility: Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce, Arts Council, Arts Organizations

Measurement of Progress:

Metric: Number of performance and rehearsal spaces and galleries, number of performances/showings, number of arts based entities in the City

Reporting: Economic Development, Arts Council, Chamber of Commerce, Northampton Center for the Arts or other collaboration of arts organizations

Target: Maintain the number of venues; Increase the number of performances/showings; Retain or increase the number of arts related entities.

Responsibility for Target: Economic Development, Arts Council, Chamber of Commerce, Arts Organizations, Arts Community

Goal AC-2: Support artists in the community

Objectives:

1. Provide affordable living, office, presentation, performance, and rehearsal space for artists and cultural organizations in the City.
2. Create an expanded base of business and individual financial support for artists, cultural organizations, and cultural resources.
3. Support alliances of artists and/or arts organizations that will organize to provide information and services on their own behalf.
4. Encourage the involvement of the cultural community in City planning to promote quality design and public art.

Actions:

Support the private development of affordable live-work and studio space.

Responsibility: Planning Board, Office of Planning and Development, Economic Development, Arts Council, Arts Organizations, developers, property owners

Measurement of Progress:

Metric: Number of artists living and working within the city

Reporting: Arts Council, Economic Development, Office of Planning and Development

Target: Maintenance and growth

Responsibility for Target: Economic Development, Arts Council, Arts Organizations, developers, property owners, Housing entities

Potential Conflicts:

- The arts are critical to the vitality of Northampton, but artists are being priced out of living, work and exhibition/performance space.

Potential Responses:

- Consider public facilities for work, exhibition and performance spaces.
- Consider the options for affordable housing that allow choices for local artists.

See also: Housing

HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Goal HC-1: Protect historic and archeological resources

Objectives:

1. Identify both historic buildings and landscapes for preservation.
2. Maintain the historic character of roads and ways within the City.
3. Maintain local historic districts and district regulations to preserve identified buildings.
4. Preserve and inventory the City's archeological resources.
5. Maintain the role of the Historical Commission, Historic Districts Commission and historic districts in City government actions.
6. Encourage private stewardship of historic and cultural resource structures and areas.
7. Provide community education and increase public awareness in an effort to assist residents to discover historic and archaeological resources in Northampton.
8. Include historic preservation standards in all of the City's public actions.

Actions:

Determine whether the creation of new historic districts is appropriate and if so, initiate the action.

Responsibility: Historic Districts Commission, Office of Planning and Development

Prepare budget estimates for preserving city owned historic buildings and sites and present as part of the capital budget process.

Responsibility: Capital Improvement Committee, Historic Commission, Community Preservation Committee, Central Services

Develop a signage marker program that educates the public on local resources.

Responsibility: Capital Improvement Committee, Historic Commission, Historic Districts Commission, Department of Public Works, Historic Northampton

Continue to review projects to identify and preserve historic resources.

Responsibility: Historic Commission, Historic Districts Commission, Planning Board, Office of Planning and Development

Create an educational program for private landowners that encourage historic preservation restrictions and easements.

Responsibility: Historic Commission, Historic Districts Commission, Office of Planning and Development

Obtain loans and grants from the state, non-profit and private sources to preserve and improve historic structures.

Responsibility: Community Preservation Committee, Historic Commission, Historic Districts Commission, Office of Planning and Development

Acquire historic preservation restrictions on valuable historic properties.

Responsibility: Community Preservation Committee, Historic Commission,

Include historic landscapes in the inventory and preservation programs.

Responsibility: Historic Commission, Historic Districts Commission

Measurement of Progress:

Metric: Number of historic sites preserved

Reporting: Historic Commission, Historic Districts Commission

Target: Increase number yearly

Responsibility for Target: Historic Commission, Planning Board

HOUSING

16

Goal H-1: Create new housing

Objectives:

1. Consider development trade-offs that allow developers to build higher densities in return for better amenities and affordable housing units.
2. Adopt inclusionary zoning to improve the quality of housing and the number of projects involving mixed-income housing programs that result in housing affordable to all ranges of incomes, especially in the downtown area.
3. Look beyond the traditional marketplace to create affordable housing options.
4. Capitalize on green and sustainable design funding opportunities for affordable housing.
5. Encourage non-profit housing developers to act on housing program goals.
6. Expand the opportunities for homes developed for households with incomes that are 80% to 120% of the area median income [AMI] level.
7. Expand rental housing options for those living below 80% of AMI
8. Assess the demand for housing for all sectors of the City's population and respond with appropriate programs.
9. Encourage housing that meets the needs of special populations, particularly the disabled.

19

15

Actions:

Identify market pressures and conditions that restrict affordable housing and consider the options to improve production with zoning relief or gap funding.

Responsibility: Affordable Housing Trust, Housing Partnership, Housing Authority, Community Preservation Committee, Office of Planning and Development

Develop a list of innovative funding mechanisms, to keep the costs of housing affordable and provide it to all housing developers.

Responsibility: Affordable Housing Trust, Housing Partnership, Housing Authority, Community Preservation Committee, Office of Planning and Development

Build rental and ownership units affordable to people with incomes from under 60%, to 130% of AMI.

Responsibility: Affordable Housing Trust, Housing Partnership, Housing Authority, Community Preservation Committee

Sustain and expand housing rehabilitation programs.

Responsibility: Housing Partnership, Housing Authority

Acknowledge, support and encourage landlords who will participate in a partnership to preserve “market-rate affordable” units as rental units. Define a city policy, appropriate actions and identify a representative to work with owners/managers of existing subsidized units to preserve affordability, especially rental units being converted to condominiums.

Responsibility: Mayor, City Council, Affordable Housing Trust, Housing Partnership, Housing Authority, Planning Board

Develop a community education program to promote these goals.

Responsibility: Affordable Housing Trust, Housing Partnership

Continue to support first-time homebuyer programs (and post-purchase education), and work with the Valley CDC to identify projects that will broaden their reach and effectiveness.

Responsibility: Housing Partnership, Housing Authority

Determine if there are any regulatory changes that would facilitate the development of affordable live-work space to attract and retain artists (and start-up businesses) in the City.

Responsibility: Affordable Housing Trust, Housing Partnership, Planning Board, Economic Development

Measurement of Progress:

Metric: Number of affordable housing units created and maintained, amount of money spent by CPAC on housing

Reporting: Affordable Housing Trust, Housing Partnership

Target: Range of unit costs related to income distribution

Responsibility for Target: Mayor, City Council, Affordable Housing Trust, Housing Partnership, Planning Board

Potential Conflicts:

- A desire for a diverse community is hampered by Northampton’s success as a desirable place to live thereby contributing to decreased affordability and diversity. There is a desire to be welcoming to outsiders, and their wealth, but without pushing out working families and Northampton natives.
- A desire for more businesses, jobs and diverse housing options at a range of affordability levels but against the realization that new development can conflict with a desire to preserve open space, wildlife habitat and corridors, and agriculture.

Potential Responses:

- Enforce inclusive development policies that require mixing affordable housing with market rate at a set standard that is developed by the City. For example, all new developments will include 20% of the units to be affordable (as defined as for individuals with less than 80% of the area median income).
- Increase residential densities in the village centers and downtown areas to provide density where it is supportable and where it meets smart growth goals.

See also: Land Use, Economic Development, Arts and Culture

Goal H-2: Preserve and sustain existing housing

Objectives:

1. Acknowledge, support, and encourage landlords who are maintaining “market-rate affordable” units as rental units. Define a city policy, appropriate actions, and identify a representative to work with owners/managers of existing units to preserve affordability.

2. Identify the present affordable housing at risk (e.g. “expiring use”) and work with non-profits to identify and secure funding sources to preserve the units as affordable.
3. Increase the number of enhanced single-room occupancy units
4. Develop ways to sustain and build the Affordable Housing Trust Fund
5. Sustain and expand housing rehab programs

Measurement of Progress:

Metric: Number of affordable housing units created and maintained; money provided by Community Preservation Committee on affordable housing

Reporting: Affordable Housing Trust, Housing Partnership

Target: Range of unit costs related to income distribution

Responsibility for Target: Mayor, City Council, Affordable Housing Trust, Housing Partnership, Planning Board, Community Preservation Committee

Goal H-3: Work to end homelessness

Objectives:

1. Continue to support participation and facilitation of the Franklin-Hampshire Continuum of Care Coalition
2. Regionally: Support “ Pioneer Valley 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness,” Co-Chaired by Mayor Higgins (launched April 27, 2007 to be completed October 2007) with workgroups on Affordable Housing, Stabilization and Prevention, Mainstream Resources, Data and Research, Chronic Homelessness, and Building Leadership to End Homelessness
3. Locally: Work on economic development, develop housing for homeless, health care and poverty issues as means to impact homelessness

17

Actions:

Participate in the Franklin-Hampshire Continuum of Care Coalition

Responsibility: Mayor, City Council, Housing Partnership

Implement the Pioneer Valley 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness (April 2007)

Responsibility: Mayor, City Council, Housing Partnership

Measurement of Progress:

Metric: Fewer stays in the homeless shelters and number of new transitional housing units created

Reporting: Affordable Housing Trust, Housing Partnership

Target: Housing for all homeless

Responsibility for Target: Affordable Housing Trust, Housing Partnership, Housing Authority, service providers, non-profit housing developers, job creators

Potential Conflicts:

- Until there is a sufficient inventory of affordable housing, jobs that pay a living wage, affordable health care and access to mainstream resources, homelessness cannot be ended.

Potential Response:

- All sectors of the national, regional, and local communities need to accept this realization and adopt this approach, rather than looking to the human service providers, in isolation, to end homelessness.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND CAPITAL RESOURCES

Goal IC-1: Ensure the capital improvement program is coordinated with Sustainable Northampton plan goals and objectives

Objectives:

1. Develop a long-term strategic plan for capital improvement plan.
2. Create a yearly review process for the capital program that includes consideration of the other City plans.
3. Coordinate the annual review with an analysis of cost effectiveness.
4. Ensure capital improvement plan is developed and implemented in a consistent and transparent fashion to meet the most pressing needs across the City.
5. Maintain and increase general fund allocation to support planned future capital projects from 2.1% yearly to 5% yearly.

Actions:

Develop capital improvements requests to identify and prioritize transportation improvements that support this plan and economic development.

Responsibility: Capital Improvement Committee

Monitor the status of infrastructure and schedule upgrades and replacements with service levels matching the Future Land Use map.

Responsibility: Capital Improvement Committee, Department of Public Works

Allocate infrastructure investments according to desired development patterns and density.

Responsibility: Capital Improvement Committee, Board of Public Works, Planning Board

Assess school facility needs and establish a capital program for action

Responsibility: Capital Improvement Committee, School Department

Measurement of Progress:

Budget Review

Metric: Conformance with Sustainable Northampton

Reporting: Mayor, All City Departments

Target: One hundred percent conformance

Responsibility for Target: All City Departments

Capital Savings

Metric: Amount saved for planned, future capital projects

Reporting: Finance Director

Target: Raise from 2.1% to 5% of yearly budget

Responsibility for Target: Mayor, City Council

See also: Municipal Governance and Financial Stability

Goal IC-2: Program and utilize public buildings for maximum efficiency and availability
Objectives:

1. Establish a facilities management program that maximizes utilization of existing space.
2. Improve operational cost efficiencies with more full utilization.
3. Ensure availability for all residents.

Actions:

Prepare a list of all public buildings with their public meeting spaces and facilities, and prepare a public scheduler that is managed through City Hall with the School Department to allow more complete utilization of the facilities.

Responsibility: Central Services, Library, Department of Public Works, School Department

Measurement of Progress:

Metric: Efficiency of space utilization

Reporting: Facilities managers

Target: Full utilization in accordance with accommodations

Responsibility for Target: Facilities managers, Central Services, All City Departments

Goal IC-3: Upgrade the City's aging stormwater management system
Objectives:

1. Develop and implement plan to replace aging infrastructure throughout the City.
2. Include 'low impact' and NPDES drainage improvements concurrently with any pavement management program or project.
3. Invest in stormwater management improvements.
4. Ensure investments in stormwater are distributed by comparable infrastructure needs.

Actions:

Complete an engineering assessment on the ability to meet present and future storm water management requirements. Include low impact and green design considerations in the assessment.

Responsibility: Board of Public Works, Department of Public Works

Establish a yearly budget with priorities and schedule for upgrading the systems

Responsibility: Board of Public Works, Department of Public Works

Measurement of Progress:

Metric: Improvement in water quality

Reporting: Department of Public Works, Health Department, Office of Planning and Development

Target: Continued investment in stormwater upgrades

Responsibility for Target: Board of Public Works, Board of Health, Planning Board

TRANSPORTATION

Goal T-1: Ensure the safe and efficient transportation of goods and people by motor vehicles, bicycle, foot, and any other means

Objectives:

1. Maintain an efficient transportation system.
2. Maintain a transportation system that reduces air pollution and air pollution, and minimizes congestion.
3. Ensure that environmental impacts are considered and adverse effects are minimized on all transportation projects.
4. Reduce use of single occupancy vehicles.
5. Ensure that safety is a primary goal in transportation improvements, systems, and operations, both to reduce crashes and to ensure that both vehicular and non-vehicular modes of traffic are safe and attractive to all users on all roads.
6. Participate with regional efforts to improve utilization of intelligent transportation systems.
7. Develop a public transit plan in coordination with Pioneer Valley Transit Authority and Pioneer Valley Planning Commission.
8. Ensure that the needs of transit services, bicycle, pedestrian, and wheelchairs are considered and addressed in the design, construction, and management of every project affecting the transportation system.

Actions:

Inventories and data:

The Police Department's Safety Officer shall prepare an annual report on motor vehicle collisions, their location, and whether personal injury is involved. Share relevant crash data with other city boards and departments whenever requested.

Responsibility: Police Department

Maintain an in-house pavement management system to inform pavement management decisions and ensure an objective decision making process.

Responsibility: Department of Public Works

Department of Public Works should provide the Transportation and Parking Commission, Board of Public Works, Mayor, and City Council with annual lists of street and intersections, which are planned for design or construction to aid in multi-board/department communications.

Responsibility: Department of Public Works

Intersection design:

Include the following considerations in all intersection studies and designs:

- Intersection improvements designed to increase traffic speed and volume (decrease queuing times) should ensure the safety of pedestrians and cyclists and should be carefully weighed against any loss of green space and tree canopy, any increase in stormwater runoff, and any detrimental impacts on neighborhoods, adjoining streets, and private property.
- When designing for truck movements (such as specified by MassHighway), avoid excessively wide intersections through the use of appropriate mitigation such as mountable curbs, mountable pedestrian islands, raised pedestrian crossings, and/or alternate truck routes when possible.
- Include an analysis of the suitability of roundabouts and mini-roundabouts during the preliminary engineering analysis for all intersections being considered for significant

reconstruction, realignment, signalization, and four-way stops. Roundabouts are the favored intersection treatment for safety, efficiency, and environmental reasons, when appropriate. The Board of Public Works and the Transportation and Parking Commission shall be consulted before making any determination not to add a roundabout or mini-roundabout.

- Ensure that all new and existing traffic signals incorporate audible pedestrian signals (dedicated pedestrian-only phase, pedestrian activated pedestrian-only phase, or a shared phase). Create a prioritized list of existing traffic signals where pedestrian signals are desired. Installation of pedestrian signals shall be made as funding becomes available. When no pedestrian infrastructure (sidewalks) currently exists, traffic signal equipment shall be installed that will allow for future pedestrian signalization. In deciding what kind of traffic signal to use, consider shared pedestrian phases (where pedestrians cross with parallel vehicle traffic) as well as full stop phases in order to minimize delays for both drivers and pedestrians.

Responsibility: Board of Public Works, Transportation and Parking Commission, Planning Board

Traffic calming:

Examine all unsafe intersections, areas of excessive speeds, and areas where neighborhoods perceive a loss of quality of life to consider possible traffic calming efforts. Draft a policy for identifying areas that need traffic calming (see Transportation Plan).

Responsibility: Board of Public Works, Planning Board

Draft and implement traffic calming in the standards for subdivision and zoning major site plan approval regulations.

Responsibility: Board of Public Works, Planning Board, Committee on Disabilities, Office of Planning and Development

Ensure that the design of all new, reconstructed, and reclaimed streets considers incorporating appropriate traffic calming measures, in consultation with the Board of Public Works and the Transportation and Parking Commission.

Responsibility: Transportation and Parking, Board of Public Works, Planning Board

Implement traffic calming measures. Develop a complete list of where traffic calming measures might be needed within the city. Use first few projects to develop traffic calming model (both methods and community outreach and involvement) that can be used elsewhere in the city.

Responsibility: Transportation and Parking, Department of Public Works, Office of Planning and Development

Sidewalks:

Create a sidewalk management program modeled on the successful pavement management program to inventory sidewalks, sidewalk conditions, sidewalk usage, and to identify priorities for new or restored sidewalks.

Responsibility: Department of Public Works, Office of Planning and Development

4

Determine whether Chapter 90 monies should be used for sidewalks or remain committed only for street improvements. Determine whether any other funds are available and if they are sufficient for the sidewalk program, and act accordingly.

Responsibility: Transportation and Parking Commission, Department of Public Works, Office of Planning and Development

Provide sidewalks on all roads within one mile of all schools.

Responsibility: Transportation and Parking Commission, Board of Public Works, Planning Board

Ensure that all developers provide sidewalks when necessary to serve their projects.

Responsibility: Transportation and Parking, Board of Public Works, Planning Board

Ensure that all new and reconstructed streets include sidewalks unless right-of-way or engineering issues or the rural nature (based on projected traffic and development density when the street is built-out) of a street makes it not feasible. When sidewalks are installed, no consultation with the Board of Public Works or Transportation and Parking Commission is necessary. Otherwise, the Board of Public Works and the Transportation and Parking Commission shall be consulted before any determination is made not to add such a sidewalk.

Responsibility: Transportation and Parking, Board of Public Works, Planning Board

Add wheelchair ramps and pavement markings necessary to make all sidewalks accessible for people with mobility disabilities.

Responsibility: Committee on Disabilities, Department of Public Works, Office of Planning and Development

Create and update a prioritized list of routes where sidewalks are desired, ready to take advantage of funding and construction opportunities.

Responsibility: Transportation and Parking, Department of Public Works, Office of Planning and Development

Create and update a prioritized list of routes where curb extensions, raised intersections and other sidewalk improvements are desired, ready to take advantage of funding and construction opportunities. Install such improvements as funding allows.

Responsibility: Transportation and Parking, Department of Public Works, Office of Planning and Development

Educate the public and enforce requirements to ensure the safety of sidewalks, including existing requirements that property owners abutting sidewalks -- Clear snow from sidewalks after a storm, with a priority on sidewalks in commercial areas and along arterial and collector streets (Section 19-19, Northampton Code of Ordinances); and control brush from growing over sidewalks or blocking visibility at intersections.

Responsibility: Transportation and Parking, Committee on Disabilities, Department of Public Works, Office of Planning and Development

Enforce traffic and sidewalk regulations, ordinances, and statutes on the book in order to promote safety.

Responsibility: Transportation and Parking, Board of Public Works, Planning Board, Police Department

Signage:

When funds become available, prepare a sign inventory and implement a plan to bring signage and crosswalks into conformance with the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). Signage related to marked crosswalks is the first priority.

Responsibility: Transportation and Parking, Board of Public Works, Planning Board

Snow clearing:

Clear snow to provide reasonably safe driving and biking conditions and access to public transit stops. However, the level of service available will be based on the resources the City is able and willing to allocate.

Responsibility: Transportation and Parking, Department of Public Works

Measurement of Progress:

Metric: Percent of streets considered safe for pedestrians, Number of crosswalks painted, Number of intersection safety improvements

Reporting: Transportation and Parking, Public Works, Police, Department of Public Works, Office of Planning and Development

Target: One hundred percent considered safe

Responsibility for Target: Board of Public Works, Planning Board

Potential Conflicts:

- Certain forms of travel, such as skateboards and motorized scooters, have become controversial because of perceived incompatibility.

Potential Responses:

- Bring the user groups into public dialog, either in community meetings or in the schools, to obtain trust and cooperation.

Goal T-2: Improve circulation system to accommodate development and encourage bicycle and pedestrian transit

Objectives:

1. Ensure that all new privately built streets include sidewalks, consistent with the Northampton Subdivision Regulations. When feasible and practical, concrete sidewalks on two sides of a street are most desirable.
2. Calm traffic to preserve pedestrian safety and encourage pedestrian activity in neighborhoods and villages.
3. Transform the Northampton Bike Path and Norwottuck Rail Trail into a complete rail-trail network.
4. Ensure that economic development goals are considered and balanced with other City goals in all transportation objectives, decisions, and improvements
5. Upgrade transportation and public utilities to facilitate expansion of the commercial/industrial site inventory in identified growth areas
6. Ensure pedestrian, bicycle, non-motorized travel, and transit are addressed in every development project.
7. Ensure that public transit stops are located at industrial parks and commercial centers.

Actions:

Incentives and Fees:

Clarify the basis for calculating in-lieu of traffic improvement fees and include incentives for projects that are within 500m (walking distance) to basic services, Florence, Downtown, and public transit.

Responsibility: Planning Board, Transportation and Parking, Office of Planning and Development

Design for bicycles:

Design roadway improvements with consideration that “a bicyclist should be expected to be riding on any roadway {and a pedestrian walking along the roadway}, and therefore should be accommodated” (Building Better Bicycling, MassHighway, 1999).

Responsibility: Transportation and Parking, Department of Public Works, Office of Planning and Development

Complete a survey and replacement program to ensure catch basin covers are in a “bicycle-safe” format.

Responsibility: Transportation and Parking, Department of Public Works

Develop a comprehensive citywide bicycle system including existing and planned off-road bicycle paths, on-road bicycle lanes, and safe on-road bicycle routes. On-road bicycle routes and lanes that provide direct access to the growing rail-trail network and to urban core areas should receive a high priority. The system should include supporting services, such as signage, bicycle storage, and bicycle system maps and information.

Responsibility: Transportation and Parking, Board of Public Works, Department of Public Works, Planning Board, Office of Planning and Development

Add marked bicycle lanes to all surface arterial, collector, and federal aid roads whenever feasible; i.e., all surface roads except local roads.

Responsibility: Transportation and Parking, Board of Public Works

Transform the Northampton Bike Path and Norwottuck Rail Trail into a complete rail trail network with construction funding from federal, state and local sources. Design, permitting, and land acquisition will be completed locally. [See Rail Trail Network map]

Responsibility: Transportation and Parking, Board of Public Works, Department of Public Works, Office of Planning and Development

Educate the public about the rights and responsibilities of bicyclists, to the extent that financial resources allow. Consider a bicycle safety curriculum at all school levels. Maintain web-based information on transportation facilities and transportation users' rights and responsibilities. Consider use of community television channel and newspapers to carry relevant stories and public service announcements.

Responsibility: Transportation and Parking, Department of Public Works, Office of Planning and Development

Increase the number of official walking routes throughout the city.

Responsibility: Transportation and Parking, Board of Public Works, Planning Board

Improve traffic congestion:

Traffic congestion problems should generally be addressed by providing and enhancing alternatives to single-occupancy vehicles, rather than by adding roads or road lanes. The long-term effect on "induced traffic" (individuals' decision to drive on a particular road or route encouraged by perceived low congestion) should be carefully considered whenever roadways are reconfigured or widened in an attempt to relieve congestion. When enhancing intersections, as opposed to roadways, the City's goal is to avoid inducing additional traffic while reducing intersection queuing times, to avoid polluting idling and to allow smooth flow of traffic.

Responsibility: Transportation and Parking, Board of Public Works, Planning Board

Roadways should be designed to be environmentally sensitive, to the extent feasible, with elements such as tree belts and curbs designed to improve the human environment and reduce impact on the natural environment.

Responsibility: Transportation and Parking, Board of Public Works, Planning Board, Department of Public Works, Office of Planning and Development

Layout new City streets to avoid creating cul-de-sacs and dead ends when possible and instead create a network of streets. Dead end streets, while desirable to some residents, add significantly to the delivery of city services and increases traffic flows to other local streets. Design streets to avoid creating new high-speed short cuts through residential neighborhoods.

Responsibility: Transportation and Parking, Board of Public Works, Planning Board, Department of Public Works, Office of Planning and Development

TDM:

Incorporate reasonable steps to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips for new projects. Transportation demand management (TDM) techniques will be tailored to suit individual project needs, user needs, and the overall feasibility of the project while addressing City TDM goals. This may include:

- Capital improvements (e.g., sidewalks, bicycle lanes, non-motorized trails and connections, bus stops, car pool parking);
- Incentives for low-impact transportation (e.g., transit, car pooling, cycling, and walking) along with reduced incentives for single-occupancy vehicles (e.g., below-cost employee parking);
- Policies to redistribute traffic impacts (e.g., set employee hours to avoid peak hour commutes);
- Support for private, shared vehicle services.

Responsibility: Transportation and Parking, Board of Public Works, Planning Board, Department of Public Works, Office of Planning and Development

Measurement of Progress:***Bicycles and Pedestrians***

10

Metric: Miles and locations of bikeways and sidewalks, Number of miles of bike paths with target increase, Percent of population within one mile of a bike path, Percent of streets with sidewalks/sidewalks safe to walk on/within a mile of schools, Percent of children able to walk to school, Percent of population able to get basic services without driving.

Reporting: Department of Public Works, Office of Planning and Development

Target: Increase bikeways connecting to schools, commercial areas and neighborhoods by 1500 feet per year; Improve or add 1500 feet of sidewalk per year

Responsibility for Target: Board of Public Works, Department of Public Works, Planning Board, Transportation and Parking Commission, Parking Manager, Office of Planning and Development

Congestion

Metric: Average commute time, Number of workforce commuter miles, Number of SOV commuters/# carpooling

Reporting: Transportation and Parking Commission, Office of Planning and Development

Target: Reduced commuting time and miles, increased number of carpoolers

Responsibility for Target: Commuters

Transportation Demand Management

Metric: Number of new TDM measures implemented

Reporting: Transportation and Parking Commission, Planning

Target: Where the businesses generate more than 500 trips per day, new TDM measures applied to existing businesses each year, and all new businesses to institute TDM

Responsibility for Target: Transportation and Parking Commission, PVTA, PVPC, and the Planning Board, Office of Planning and Development

Goal T-3: Improve and expand public transit

Objectives:

1. Develop a public transit plan in cooperation with the PVTA and PVPC to expand and enhance the transit system to the level that it is economically viable and supported by ridership.
2. Leverage regional collaborations to increase funding for provision of public transit services, including shuttles where appropriate.
3. Consider transportation associations that include memberships of local businesses and government to support the shuttle.
4. Develop Transit Oriented Development guidelines with incentives.
5. Encourage increased use of transit options.
6. Provide reasonable options for public transit based on need, cost, and funding.

Actions:

Ensure higher visibility and better information about public transit routes and stops.

Responsibility: Transportation and Parking, Department of Public Works

Locate bus stops on major transit routes and adjacent to commercial centers.

Responsibility: Transportation and Parking, Department of Public Works

Continue to work with PVTA and PVPC to consider a centralized public transit or multi-modal facility in Northampton.

Responsibility: Transportation and Parking, Capital Improvement Committee, Central Services, Planning Board, Office of Planning and Development

Promote the use of special event shuttles to connect parking on the edge of downtown with downtown special events when appropriate.

Responsibility: Transportation and Parking

Explore the potential for park-and-ride lots (e.g. in Leeds and the Village at Hospital Hill) to minimize traffic congestion

Responsibility: Transportation and Parking, Office of Planning and Development

Ensure adequate parking is present in newly proposed large projects to meet their parking demand, consistent with efforts to reduce traffic, cars, and parking needs through transportation demand management.

Responsibility: Planning Board, Transportation and Parking, Office of Planning and Development

Ask federal and state government to ensure appropriate funding and levels of service for public transit.

Responsibility: Mayor, City Council, Planning Board

Provide land use and financial program (e.g. District Improvement Financing) incentives for Transit Oriented Development

Responsibility: Mayor, City Council, Planning Board

Measurement of Progress:

Transit

Metric: Number and location of routes for public transit; Number, quality and type of facilities, Number of buses and bus stops

Reporting: Public Works, Transportation and Parking Commission

Target: Add one new transit stop for every 150 new jobs added locally; Add a transit route for every 500 jobs added regionally

Responsibility for Target: Public Works, Transportation and Parking Commission, PVTA, PVPC, and the Planning Board

Measurement of Progress:

Metric: Increase in transit use and transit oriented development

Reporting: Office of Planning and Development

Target: Increases exceeding growth in population and commensurate with transportation demands

Responsibility for Target: Transportation and Parking Commission, Office of Planning and Development

Goal T-4: Support federal and State investments in transportation improvements

Objectives:

1. Compare the State Transportation Improvement Plan and regional Transportation Improvement Program with the goals and objectives of Sustainable Northampton to ensure compatibility.
2. Review the State Transportation Improvement Plan and regional Transportation Improvement Program to ensure investments are programmed for the City.
3. Ensure the plans can provide support to all sectors and areas of the City.

Actions:

Participation in the Transportation Improvement Plan process should be coupled with the local administration's support of federal and state projects that invest transportation funds in projects that meet the goals and objectives of this plan.

Responsibility: Mayor, City Council, Transportation and Parking, Board of Public Works, Planning Board

Support forward funding of regional transportation authorities

Responsibility: Mayor, City Council, Transportation Committee, users

Measurement of Progress:

Metric: Federal and State money promised for local transportation improvements

Reporting: Capital Improvement Committee, Board of Public Works

Target: Increases commensurate with projected growth in transportation demands

Responsibility for Target: Capital Improvement Committee, Board of Public Works, Transportation and Parking

Potential Conflicts:

- A desire to promote bikes, walking, reduced automobile use, and providing public transportation vs. the reality of automobile habits that will not change easily.
- A desire for more parking downtown and public transportation serving commercial and employment centers conflicts with increasingly limited financial resources.

Potential Responses:

- Provide high quality and useable ped/bike facilities to encourage use.
- Educate people on the health benefits of walking and biking.
- Find a balance between business and public financial support for parking options.

MUNICIPAL GOVERNANCE AND FINANCIAL STABILITY

Goal MG-1: Diversify revenue streams to support municipal operations

Objectives:

1. Match land use changes and improvements with diversified revenue potential.
2. Lead regional and statewide effort to increase authority for municipalities to develop and implement non-property tax local revenue sources.
3. Develop revenue streams in an equitable and consistent manner for all populations in the City.
4. Consider acquisition of key properties that support cultural diversity and mixed use in the downtown and village areas, and using their reinvestment potential to obtain developer's fees.

Actions:

Identify properties and blocks that are appropriate for redevelopment

Responsibility: Economic Development, Planning Board, City Council, Office of Planning and Development

Ask all city departments for suggestions to increase revenues

Responsibility: Mayor, Finance Director, All City Departments

Measurement of Progress:

Metric: New revenue sources added

Reporting: Finance Director

Target: Three percent increase per year in non-property tax revenues

Responsibility for Target: All City Departments

Goal MG-2: Encourage development that either "pays its own way" or meets other community goals, such as job creation

Objectives:

1. Include considerations for the overall environmental impact of the project in determining whether it is "paying its own way."
2. Minimize the adverse municipal fiscal impacts of development.
3. Recognize the benefits of development projects that support social goals.

Actions:

Prepare a fiscal impact assessment to determine current costs and develop an impact assessment and fee program to address shortfalls.

Responsibility: Finance Director, All City departments collecting fees

Measurement of Progress:

Metric: Municipal services fiscal impacts

Reporting: Finance Director

Target: Conformance with municipal services fiscal impact standards

Responsibility for Target: All City Departments

Goal MG-3: Maximize use and return on targeted tax incentives and other state programs to support the City's economic goals

Objectives:

1. Consider state programs for DIF, TIF, 40R/40S, Expedited Permitting, UCH-TIF, as a means to encourage appropriate development through tax incentives and reimbursement programs.

Actions:

Review and consider new or additional application of DIF, c. 40R/40S. UHF-TIF and similar programs aimed at improving local projects and City tax roles.

Responsibility: Mayor, City Council, Planning Board, Economic Development, Finance Director, Office of Planning and Development

Measurement of Progress:

Metric: Amount of revenues from non-traditional sources

Reporting: Finance Director

Target: Increased city revenues without diminishing existing revenue streams

Responsibility for Target: All City Departments

Goal MG-4: Align school district and all department budgets and policies with Sustainable Northampton goals and objectives

Objectives:

1. Add consideration of the goals and policies of this plan to the yearly budget review process.
2. Coordinate the review with an analysis of cost effectiveness.
3. Ensure the budget is developed and implemented in a consistent and transparent fashion to meet the most pressing needs across the City.
4. Ask every appointed or elected official to advocate for sustainability in all official actions.

Actions:

Review the yearly City budget against the Sustainable Northampton goals and objectives. Charge the Mayor or designee with incorporating this annual review as part of the operating and capital budget analysis.

Responsibility: Mayor or designee

Measurement of Progress:

Metric: Percent of programs conforming to this comprehensive plan

Reporting: Mayor or designee

Target: One hundred percent

Responsibility for Target: All City Departments

See also: Infrastructure and Capital Resources

Potential Conflicts:

- The conflict between residents' desire for services, and their willingness/ability to pay for them.
- There is a desire for improved public services, but with limited resources, it's hard to rally support for investing in, and maintaining, infrastructure and physical improvements.

Potential Responses:

- Set down priorities for review of the capital budget and review those priorities each year during the budget process.

EDUCATION

Goal E-1: Promote and support high achievement by each student in a safe, healthy secure environment and enable each student to become a critical thinker and socially responsible citizen in a global society

Objectives:

1. Provide safe, secure, clean and accessible school facilities.
2. Improve student assessment scores for all students.
3. Provide professional development opportunities to all staff working with students to insure high quality staff, and to insure continuance of curriculum revision and review, Pre-K through 12th grade.
4. Insure equal access to education to all NPS students.
5. Create a school system that is respectful and welcoming of the diverse members of the community and integrating them into the school culture.

Actions:

Ask the School Department to provide a regularly updated implementation plan for the educational goals

Responsibility: School Department

Measurement of Progress:

Metrics: Number of regional educational choices, Number of library volumes / capita, Teacher retention rates and longevity, Average educational level obtained, Drop-out rate, Number of after school programs and summer programs,

Reporting: School Department, Library Department

Target: Maintenance of regional choices, Increase in library volumes, More teachers / smaller classrooms, Increase in average education, decrease in drop-out rate, Increase in programs

Responsibility for Target: School Department, Library Department

Goal E-2: Educate students in an integrated program in the art and science of agriculture and other technical careers, and provide experiential learning opportunities that will enable students to function proficiently within the parameters of the workplace and post-secondary education

Objectives:

1. Use the programs to educate students on the environmental and land use implications of the particular career field.
2. Model an attitude of personal, professional, and institutional excellence.
3. Continually develop curricula that nurture students' self-esteem and inspire them to strive to reach their full potential.
4. Foster an understanding of the value of education so that students become lifelong learners.
5. Respect the diversity of our multi-cultural society by recognizing and affirming the inherent worth and dignity of all people.

6. Encourage non-traditional career path choices by actively working to eliminate racial, cultural, and gender biases.

Actions:

Ask the School Department to provide a regularly updated implementation plan for the educational goals

Responsibility: School Department

Measurement of Progress:

Metric: Number of student successes

Reporting: Success stories from School Department and Families

Target: Increasing number of success stories

Responsibility for Target: Citywide

Goal E-3: In partnership with parents, guardians and the Northampton community promote and support high achievement by each student in a safe, healthy secure environment and to enable each student to become a critical thinker and socially responsible citizen in a global society

Objectives:

1. Provide global, regional, and local perspectives.
2. Maintain excellence in all schools.
3. Continue to work in partnership with businesses and community organizations, such as the Northampton Educational Fund, the Northampton Chamber of Commerce, and the Volunteers in Northampton Schools to meet the diverse educational needs of children.
4. Support and expand collaborative academic outreach opportunities with Smith College and 5-College system to raise academic achievement and opportunity for all children.

Actions:

Ask the School Department to provide a regularly updated implementation plan for the educational goals

Responsibility: School Department

Measurement of Progress:

Metric: Parent involvement in school affairs

Reporting: School Department

Target: Increasing involvement

Responsibility for Target: School Committee

Potential Conflicts:

- Desire for a quality educational system, but insufficient resources and inability to pay for it.

Potential Responses:

- Seek partnerships and sponsorships with private institutions.

Goal E-4: Promote the local library system

Objectives:

1. All library users will experience the facilities as welcoming, responsive, and satisfying.

2. The needs and interests of the community will guide the development and improvement of library services.
3. The community's awareness of library services and resources will be strengthened.
4. The Board of Trustees of the Forbes Library will ensure the long term financial security and address immediate financial needs of the library
5. The Board of Trustees of Forbes Library will update its governance structure to more effectively fulfill the mission of the Library.

Actions:

Actions for the Forbes Library are listed in the long range plan.

Responsibility: Library Board of Trustees

Measurement of Progress:

Metric: Library use and satisfaction

Reporting: Library Board of Trustees

Target: Expansion of use and user satisfaction

Responsibility for Target: Library Board of Trustees

SOCIAL EQUITY

Goal SE-1: Invest in all segments of the community to retain a population with a diverse demographic and income levels

Objectives:

1. Ensure a safe and secure environment for all.
2. Improve housing affordability to retain a diversity of residents.
3. Reach out to marginalized populations to ensure all feel welcome in the City.
4. Ensure civic and physical accessibility for all.
5. Ensure safe and equitable workplaces and housing for all workers, including undocumented residents.

Actions:

Increase active involvement of community policing and resources at densely developed housing complexes, downtown, and Florence

Responsibility: Police Department

Encourage community police involvement with community organizing or tenant groups to develop increased collaboration and empowerment.

Responsibility: Police Department

Provide strict enforcement of laws related to drug dealing.

Responsibility: Police Department

Provide more anti-racism/anti-discrimination, anti-violence, training for school staff and students to create an environment of tolerance, diversity, and fairness in public schools so all children and families feel valued.

Responsibility: School Committee, School Department

Implement focused school and public anti-violence programs especially around domestic/family violence.

Responsibility: School Department, Police Department

Improve property maintenance at public and private low-income housing properties.

Responsibility: Housing Authority, Housing Partnership,

Implement the capital program for universal accessibility for public sidewalks, public transit, and public buildings

Responsibility: Mayor, Capital Improvement Committee, City Council, Planning Board, Board of Public Works

Measurement of Progress:

Public Safety

Metric: Crime rate and Number of tenant associations

Reporting: Police Department, Housing Authority, Housing Partnership

Target: Continuous reduction or stabilization of rate

Responsibility for Target: Citywide, Housing Authority, Housing Partnership

Public Involvement

Metric: Number of people involved in city functions and voting in elections, Number of volunteer hours/capita, Number of minorities in civic affairs, Number of people with access to media with local coverage and internet

Reporting: All departments, Registrar of Voters

Target: Increase citizen participation

Responsibility for Target: All City departments

Goal SE-2: Ensure quality education and academic achievement for all segments of the community

Objectives:

1. Provide public education in local and community issues.
2. Support public education, Pre-K through 12th grade.
3. Increase relationships and partnerships with institutions of higher education in the City and the region to increase resources provided from and access to higher education.
4. Support life long learning opportunities; i.e., GED, Adult Basic Education and other advancement programs.
5. Encourage educational programs that result in creating good citizenship.
6. Work on local, state, and federal level to advocate for early education for all.

Actions:

Provide programs in the schools for dual language learners.

Responsibility: School Committee, School Department

Reduce the achievement gap - ensure non-English speaking students are succeeding with tutoring and support programs.

Responsibility: School Committee, School Department

Support School Committee goal/guidelines for smaller class sizes.

Responsibility: Mayor, City Council

Improve sex/drug/alcohol awareness education in the schools.

Responsibility: School Committee, School Department

Increase parent involvement with volunteer programs and recognition of participation.

Responsibility: School Committee, School Department

Provide support for parents of special education students – advocacy, bilingual/bicultural special education providers, and individualized and specialized equipment.

Responsibility: School Committee, School Department

Increase funding support for dropout prevention programs.

Responsibility: Mayor, City Council

Support vocational education with funding and collaborations with private schools.

Responsibility: Mayor, City Council, School Committee,

Seek collaborations to increase educational access to higher education and career/education ladders targeting prospective workers, workers, and at-risk youth.

Responsibility: Mayor, City Council, School Committee,

Measurement of Progress:

Metric: Number of graduates from K-12 programs; Number of graduates from K-12 programs that enroll in post-secondary education or enter the job market in their field of vocational or agricultural training; Number/percentage of Pre-K children in stimulus programs; Number/percentage of adults in education programs; Number of programs focused on local job training

Reporting: School Department, Smith Agricultural School, and other education providers

Target: Increasing average educational level; Increasing the number of teachers; Increasing the educational choices from birth –K and adult education

Responsibility for Target: School Committee, School Department (except regional educational choices), Smith Vocational School

Goal SE-3: Ensure high quality and affordable health care for all children

Objectives:

1. Work with School department and providers to raise the excellence of all care provided to children, infants and toddlers.
2. Work on local, state, and federal level to advocate for health care for all.

Actions:

Support Cooley Dickinson Hospital as a critical institution for access to health care in Northampton and Hampshire County.

Responsibility: Mayor, City Council

Investigate a community health care clinic to provide health care access to low-income residents.

Responsibility: Mayor, City Council, Health Department, Office of Planning and Development

Measurement of Progress:

Children's Health

Metric: Obesity, Visits to hospital, Birth weights, Cancer rates

Reporting: Department of Health

Target: Healthier community

Responsibility for Target: Citywide

Goal SE-4: Ensure high quality and affordable housing and care for the elderly

Objectives:

1. Site elderly housing in mixed use projects that match this plan's land use goals.
2. Encourage participation in health maintenance programs that may reduce the costs of health care for the participating individuals.
3. Work on local, state, and federal level to advocate for housing and care for all.
4. Work with Commonwealth and providers to raise the excellence of all care provided to elders.

Actions:

Support Cooley Dickinson Hospital as a critical institution for access to health care in Northampton and Hampshire County.

Responsibility: Mayor, City Council

Investigate a community health care clinic to provide health care access to low-income residents.

Responsibility: Mayor, City Council, Board of Health, Health Department, Office of Planning and Development

Measurement of Progress:

Elder Health

Metric: Obesity, Visits to hospital, Cancer rates

Reporting: Department of Health

Target: Healthier community

Responsibility for Target: Citywide

Health Care Facilities

Metric: Number of hospital beds/capita, Number of people with access to health care, Number of beds in regional shelters, Transit links to hospitals

Reporting: Department of Health

Target: Healthier community

Responsibility for Target: Health care institutions

See also: Land Use, Housing

Goal SE-5: Ensure environmental justice in all Northampton neighborhoods

Objectives:

1. Ensure equal and adequate protection from environmental and health hazards.
2. Provide prompt and appropriate mitigation of environmental hazards to improve land values.
3. Ensure equal access to the public decision-making process.

Actions:

Identify polluted and high quality environmental sites in each neighborhood and proceed to create a balance where public funding and programs can be implemented.

Responsibility: Department of Public Works, Planning Board, Office of Planning and Development

Measurement of Progress:

Metric: Number of polluted/brownfield sites remediated, by location

Reporting: Office of Planning and Development from state files

Target: Ten sites (out of approximately 150 total listed) identified with hazardous waste conditions to be remediated each year

Responsibility for Target: Board of Health, Planning Board, Board of Public Works, State

Potential Conflicts:

- A desire for a diverse community yet Northampton's success as a desirable place to live is contributing to decreased affordability and diversity - There is a desire to be welcoming to outsiders, and their wealth, without pushing out working families and Northampton natives.
- We like to think of Northampton, as being progressive and welcoming, yet there are class conflicts, racial tensions, and concerns about educational equity in our community.

Potential Responses:

- Provide opportunities for 'community conversations' where dialog will be commonplace.

Glossary of Terms

Alternative Modes of Transportation All modes of transportation serving the general public that are appropriate for the transport of people, commodities, or freight by rail, air, water, or other conveyance, exclusive of highways, wires, and pipelines.

Blueway A path following a river or waterbody. See also, Greenway.

C. 40R/40S State legislation that provides cash incentives to municipalities that adopt denser zoning districts that increase housing production. The payments are tied to the number of units and the time they are built.

Cluster A site planning technique that concentrates buildings in specific areas on the site to allow the remaining land to be used for recreation, common open space, and/or preservation of environmentally, historically, culturally or otherwise sensitive features and/or structures. The techniques used to concentrate buildings shall be specified in the ordinance and may include, but are not limited to, reduction in lot areas, setback requirements, and/or bulk requirements, with the resulting open land being devoted by deed restrictions for one or more uses. Under cluster development there is no increase in the number of lots that would be permitted under conventional development except where ordinance provisions include incentive bonuses for certain types or conditions of development.

Conservation Development A typical land development project, which conserves open land, protects site features and provides flexibility in the siting of structures, services and infrastructures.

Context Sensitive Design A collaborative, interdisciplinary approach to develop facilities that fit the physical setting and preserve scenic, aesthetic, historic and environmental resources, while maintaining safety and mobility for all users. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has identified several characteristics of context sensitive design for transportation facilities that could also apply to other project types:

- The project satisfies its purpose and needs;
- The project design is built from consensus;
- The project is safe facility for users of all ages and abilities;
- The project meets minimum design standards for accessibility for people with disabilities and gives attention to universal design principles;
- The project is in harmony with the community and preserves environmental, scenic, aesthetic, historic, and built and natural resources of the area;
- The project is designed and built with the least possible disruption to the community;
- The project is seen as having added lasting value to the community.

DIF/TIF; District Improvement Financing / Tax Increment Financing, UCH-TIF; Urban Center Housing TIF. These programs allow the City to provide a tax incentive for development that provides a public benefit or to earmark tax revenues from projects in a redevelopment area for public infrastructure such as roads and utilities.

Design Guidelines A set of discretionary standards structured by public policy and specific location goals, which include design and performance criteria that guide planning and land development to achieve a desired level of quality for the physical environment.

Easements The right to use property for specific purposes (including but not limited to conservation, maintenance, utilities, or habitat protection) or to gain access (pedestrian or vehicular) to another property. May be considered as less-than-fee-simple interest in the property.

Energy Descent Plan is based on the understanding that hydrocarbon fuels are a limited resource and will not be available in the future in the same form, at the same cost as today. As this form of

energy is depleted the supported systems of production, transportation, and land use must respond appropriately. 'Relocalization' is a concept proposed in response.

Environmental Criteria/Constraints Natural features, resources, or land characteristics that are sensitive to change and may require conservation measures, the application of special development techniques to prevent degradation of the site, limited development, or, in certain instances, may preclude development.

Expedited Permitting This state program (Chap 43D) allows a community to gain state incentives for projects meeting certain criteria and permitted within a 180-day permit process.

Green Buildings, Green Roofs are the common terms used to describe buildings and roofs that have been designed or retrofitted to reduce energy consumption. Buildings account for a majority of the energy consumption in the country. Adding green building and roof design can mean a 40% reduction in energy consumption over the standard building code (U.S. Green Building Council). The 'green' design requires an integrated analysis of all building systems; the shell, windows, heating, etc. Green roofs are intended to reduce heat exchange, and when vegetated they provide control on stormwater runoff.

Greenway An upland, vegetated path in a natural setting used for pedestrian and some bicycle travel. See also, Blueway.

Hazard Mitigation Plan A set of actions and policies designed to reduce the impacts on people and property of naturally occurring disasters, which provide the following benefits:

- A Hazard Mitigation Plan can expedite the approval process for receiving money after a federally declared disaster through the FEMA Post-Disaster Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP).
- Disaster preparation can have enormous benefits in lessened loss of life, economic and social impacts, and post-disaster recovery time.
- A Mitigation Plan can be counted towards credit points in FEMA's Community Rating System (CRS). Points are awarded for having the plan, as well as for going through the various steps involved in creating the plan, including community involvement and coordinating with other agencies. The higher a community's CRS score, the greater the discounts provided on individual property owner's National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) premiums.
- FEMA's Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) grant program and Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) program provide grants for activities designed to mitigate the effects of floods and other disasters in a community. Funds from these grants can go to acquisition, relocation, and retrofitting of structures.

Infill Development The development of vacant, usually single, parcels of land in an otherwise built-up area. Infill development provides an attractive alternative to new development by reducing loss of critical and resource lands to new development, and by focusing on strengthening older neighborhoods while reducing the cost of extending infrastructure into newly developing areas.

Natural Carrying Capacity A measure of the ability of an area to accommodate growth and development within the limits defined by existing infrastructure and natural resource capabilities to accept inputs and impacts.

New Urbanism As promoted in the Charter of the *Congress for New Urbanism*, New Urbanism supports the following principles: neighborhoods should be diverse in use and population; communities should be designed for pedestrians and transit as well as automobiles; cities and towns should be shaped by physically defined and universally accessible public spaces and community institutions; and urban places should be framed by architecture and landscape design that celebrate local history, climate, ecology, and building practice. Many of the historic and planned neighborhoods in New England built before WWII, including areas of Northampton, are the

original urbanism that New Urbanism is trying to emulate. See also, Traditional Neighborhood Development.

Non-Governmental Organization [NGO] Organizations such as community development corporations, land trusts, and chambers of commerce that fulfill a public need but are not a public agency.

Pedestrian Radius A 1/4 to 1/2 mile radius maintained around a location within which walking can be encouraged as an alternative means of transportation.

Performance Standards A verifiable, measurable set of criteria relating to meeting standards for design and operation that a particular use or process must either meet or may not exceed. Performance standards may apply to architectural and site design, use, management, environmental conditions, impact assessment, financial and job performance. Properly constructed, performance standard documents contain:

- Goals specific to the area of performance;
- Determinants of Compliance;
- Assessment Options
 - Measurements
 - Condition Indicators; and,
- Procedures.

Planned Developments A district or project designed to provide an alternative to suburban development standards and which is intended to:

- Encourage the development of traditional village centers that provide for a creative mixture of uses, including residential and business, that enhance the quality of community life through careful planning and development without compromising the protection of resources such as ground water and open space;
- Reduce initial development costs and preserve areas for common use by reducing standard minimum lot size and setback requirements;
- Preserve the character of surrounding neighborhoods and enhance the physical appearance of the area by preserving natural features and existing vegetation;
- Provide for recreation and open areas;
- Promote economical and efficient land use, which can result in smaller demands for public facilities, utilities and streets;
- Allow for the creative development of businesses that serve the planned unit development and surrounding areas and reduce the demand upon the automobile for access to businesses;
- Provide an appropriate and harmonious variety of housing and creative site design alternatives that encourage innovative development;
- Promote energy conservation by optimizing the orientation, layout and design of structures to take maximum advantage of solar heating/cooling schemes and energy-conserving landscaping;
- Provide a procedure which can relate the type, design and layout of development to a particular site and the particular demand for housing and other facilities in a manner consistent with the preservation of property values within established residential areas;
- Ensure that a large development will have adequate public services and facilities by coordinating and sharing costs with the developer; and
- Comply with the Northampton Comprehensive Plan.

Relocalization is a program for adaptation to the depletion of non-renewable resources, a response to global warming and a means to maintain compatibility with local environmental conditions. "It focuses on local and sustainable production of food, energy, and goods, in tune with the ecological bounds of each region." *Massachusetts Coalition for Healthy Communities*

Sustainability "meet[ing] the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" - *former Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland*. A sustainable community manages with a balanced set of integrated principles: Social Equity, Environmental Respect, and Economic Strength, that preserve a high quality of life for future generations.

Traditional Neighborhood Development TND is a village-style concept promoting vibrant mixed-use neighborhoods with higher densities and a range of complementary uses. TND is characterized by compact pedestrian-oriented developments that provide a variety of uses, diverse housing types, and are anchored by a central public space and civic activity. TND is based on the principle that neighborhoods should be walkable, affordable, accessible, distinctive, and true to the significant historic context of each community. The following are commonly found in TND:

- Parks, schools, civic buildings, and commercial establishments located within walking distance of homes;
- Residences with narrow front setbacks, front porches, and detached rear garages or alley-loaded parking;
- Network of streets and paths suitable for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles
- Narrower streets with crosswalks, streetscaping, and other traffic-calming measures;
- In-scale development that fits the local context; and,
- Buildings oriented to the street with parking behind.

Transfer of Development Rights [TDR] A program that can relocate development from areas where proposed land use or environmental impacts are considered undesirable (the "donor" site) to another ("receiver") site chosen on the basis of its ability to accommodate additional units of development beyond what it was zoned for with minimal environmental, social, and aesthetic impacts.

Transit Oriented Development [TOD] A TOD project locates development within walking distance of public transit, usually bus or train transit, to reduce vehicle traffic and take advantage of adjacencies, and is typically designed according to the following criteria:

- Mixed Use;
- Moderate to High Density, 12 to 65 units/acre;
- Mobility choice;
- Pedestrian connectivity;
- Reduced parking ratios;
- High quality design; and,
- Usable public open space.

Transportation/Travel Demand Management [TDM] is used to influence traveler behavior for the purpose of reducing or redistributing travel demand. The purpose of TDM is to reduce the number of vehicles on the roads by providing other choices for travel often in terms of mode and schedule.

Village A clustered settlement that is predominantly residential in nature, with community related services such as post office or church, and often has the following characteristics:

- Location at a crossroads;
- Built at a human scale;
- Small, compact development pattern;
- Contains small or narrow lots;
- Pre-twentieth century in origin; and,
- Originated around a mill, general store, tavern, family farmstead or other central feature.

Note boxes

The following are supporting information and ideas related to the note boxes included in the document. Along with the glossary of terms, these will help explain the related text and list what the city has already accomplished.

1

Green Buildings

The U. S. General Services Administration reviewed the costs of LEED certification (LEED® Cost Study, October 2004) and determined that soft costs (design phase costs) increased from \$0.35 to \$0.59 per square foot, and that construction costs increased by 1.4% to 8.2% (\$1.78 to \$10.58) per square foot, with the higher end of the costs associated with a higher level of certification. A different cost analysis (G. Kats, Massachusetts Technology Collaborative, 2003) one year earlier found a similar range of additional unit costs (\$3.00 to \$5.00/square foot), and found that certification was possible for slightly less than 2% of the overall construction costs. When sixty LEED certified buildings were compared to conventional buildings, there was an 18% to 37% energy savings in the certified buildings (Kats). With recent improvements in green building systems, the U.S. Green Building Council now (2007) claims a 40% average energy saving over standard construction with a LEED-certified building.

2

City Efforts Towards Sustainability:

John F. Kennedy Middle School:

- 10 kilowatts of photovoltaics (solar cells with solar and non-solar sources of light) to be installed on roof (beginning July 2006, expected completion: fall 2006)
- Generate 10,000-kilowatt hours of power annually (equivalent to electricity needed to power 3-4 energy efficient homes)
- Data acquisition module to monitor electricity generated & intensity of the sun

City of Northampton Department of Public Works:

- Landfill producing methane gas for electricity generation (July-August 2006)
- Biodiesel fuel for large equipment (conversion of vehicles begins July 2006)
- Smaller department vehicles replaced by hybrids (Ford Escape)

The new Northampton Senior Center:

- Geothermal heat pumps (geoexchange system) to heat, cool, provide hot water (for more details regarding geoexchange systems, please refer to city website)
- Only 43,000 Btu/Sq.-ft. energy used annually with the system vs. 106,000 Btu/Sq.-ft energy for traditional systems (60% reduction in site energy use)
- Photovoltaics on south end of center (lifespan of voltaics: 25 yrs)
- LEED certified, expected to receive a silver rating (<http://www.leadbuilding.org/>)
- LEED criteria met: sustainable site selection and development, water and energy use, indoor environmental quality, innovation in sustainable design and construction

3A

Non-city Efforts:

Cooley Dickinson Hospital

- Wood-chip burner generating portion of energy to heat & cool facilities
- 50,000 lbs. of steam per hour generated by the burner (equivalent to 48,500,000 Btu/hr of steam, typical single-family home operates on boiler of 120,000 Btu/hr)
- High-efficiency 22-watt T-8 fluorescent bulbs (same quality of light as previous bulbs but using less wattage-energy savings of 50%)

Smith College Ada Comstock Scholars Dormitory

- 10-unit apartment style living
- Features to minimize thermal and electrical energy loads:
 - Thick walls & ceilings
 - Triple-glazed windows
 - Heat recovery ventilation
 - Energy efficient (Energy Star) appliances/lighting-building has earned 5 Star + rating from Energy Star
 - Solar panels for domestic hot water production

Smith College Engineering & Molecular Sciences Building

- Emphasis on sustainability and energy efficiency
- 140,000 sq ft. building (groundbreaking scheduled for 2007)
- Photovoltaic solar cells for heating, cooling, ventilation, & the study of solar power engineering
- High efficiency electrical equipment (LED lighting fixtures, computer-monitored sensors for light, air, moisture control)
- Use of recycled materials when possible for laboratory instruction & interior enhancement of building
- Management of water consumption through low-flow fixtures, high-tech monitoring, and ecohydrology

3B

What are other communities doing?

The City of Chicago has adopted public building construction standards (The Chicago Standard)- requires the use of sustainable practices in all municipal buildings

- Based on selected points from LEED Green Building Rating System that are practical for Chicago
- Result will be LEED certified buildings that conserve 15-20% in energy costs annually
- Will help city establish group of architects & contractors experienced in green construction- knowledge & skills will transfer to private sector green building projects

The City of Chicago hopes to fuel the market for building green

- Requiring green building elements in all developments undergoing review by the Dept. of Planning & Development
- Creating a process to accelerate permits for green buildings
- Developing new financial & policy incentives for sustainable construction
- Educating city contractors & interested members of the public about the Chicago Standard
- Developing & implementing recognition programs that honor the best in green building practices

Chicago Center for Green Technology

- First municipal building and first renovated building to receive LEED Platinum rating
- Product of collaboration between private companies, local groups, and government agencies

4

Sidewalks and Bikeways

For planning, cost for sidewalk construction is about \$30 per foot (8-foot wide concrete sidewalk) and for bikeways it is about \$20 per foot (10-foot wide asphalt). So, at 1500 feet for each per year, the cost would be \$45,000 and \$30,000 per year.

5

City energy efficiency investments

- Senior Center—LEEDS Certified with Geothermal heat
- New Police Station—commitment that the design will be LEED certifiable
- New DPW Headquarters—commitment that the design will be LEED certifiable
- JFK Middle School—Photovoltaic panels
- High School Expansion and rehabilitation of other schools—new energy conservation and efficiency improvements
- Landfill gas to energy
- Biodiesel for DPW fleet

6

City Forests

Costs to plant saplings, \$5 per tree; and for larger trees, \$250 per tree. About 2.5 acres (one hectare) of forest can absorb the equivalent emissions of 100 passenger cars, and 2.67 trees absorb 1 ton of carbon dioxide.

7

Street Trees

Street trees should be planted at 30' to 45' apart, depending on the species. At \$800-850 per installed street tree, a yearly budget of \$20,000 to \$21,250 will be needed for 25 trees.. Trees planted along travel ways can reduce vehicle emissions by removing sulphur dioxide and reducing particulates by up to 75% (Johnston and Newton, London Ecology Unit). A single full-grown (beech) tree can provide equivalent cooling as five room air conditioners and will supply enough oxygen for ten people (Johnston and Newton, and Trees for Cities).

8

Low Impact Development

LID is a site planning process that considers ways to reduce the total impact of a project on the land, especially with regard to stormwater runoff. The EOE has a site that presents the LID concept:

http://www.mass.gov/envir/smart_growth_toolkit/pages/mod-lid.html

9 Local Institutions

The following are considered the key local educational and health-related institutions: Cooley-Dickinson Hospital, Smith College, Smith Agricultural School, and the V.A. Hospital.

10 Bicycle improvements

The City has:

- Three bike lanes (formal on Elm and South Street, informal on King Street)
- Bike Paths (Northampton Bike Path, Norwottuck in Northampton, Ice Pond/Rocky Hill spur)
- Bike Paths under design (6 miles)
- Bike racks downtown
- Bike lockers at Sheldon Field

11 Protected Open Space

Currently 16% of City, growing at 1/2% of City per year

12 Bicycle Parking Facilities

Citywide - 140 spaces plus 12 lockers

13 New Development

All subdivisions in last ten years have been open space residential or planned village equivalents

14 What Others Say About Us

Highest Commonwealth Capital Score for Smart Growth in the state

Number One Small Arts Community

Number One Best Place to Retire

Distinctive Community, National Trust for Historic Places

“This small city offers more restaurants and shops, certainly more galleries, theaters and performance venues than most urban centers dozens of times its size. Add two rivers, mountain views, landscaped parks and meadow walks, and you begin to see why people call it paradise” —The Boston Globe

15 The Housing Wage

The amount a person working full-time has to earn to afford the fair market rent on a two-bedroom unit while paying no more than 30 percent of income in rent [Massachusetts Housing Partnership] National Low Income Housing Coalition estimated this at \$22.65 per hour for Massachusetts in 2006.

16 Overall Housing Goal

To increase supply of housing accessible to people at a variety of income levels

17 City Social Services for Housing

The City currently has:

- Four homeless shelters
- Transitional housing
- Housing for mentally ill adults
- Other support services

18 Jobs-Housing Balance

Choices for job and housing locations are closely linked to the resulting impact on the transportation system for journeys to work. Ideally, if the right housing and jobs choices are available, and people can choose to both live and work in one area, congestion could be relieved and the community would achieve a jobs-housing balance. Other benefits would accrue to household budgets from reduced travel costs.

19 Area Median Income

	Northampton 1999 Census 1.	Springfield MSA 2000 Census 2.	Springfield MSA 2003 est. 2.
AMI	\$41,808	\$50,930	\$56,800
60% of AMI	25,085	30,558	34,080
80% of AMI	33,446	40,744	45,440
120% of AMI	50,170	61,116	68,160

Sources: 1. MISER, 2. Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council

City Boards, Committees and Commissions

Affordable Housing Trust

The Affordable Housing Trust oversees an Affordable Housing Fund to provide for the acquisition, renovation and construction of real property in Northampton for low and moderate income residents and to provide mechanisms to ensure such use, or to provide Northampton residents with loans or rental subsidies based on eligibility criteria. Members are appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the City council.

Agricultural Commission

The Agricultural Commission reviews and recommends policies on agriculture and agricultural practices.

Arts Council

The Mayor appoints and the City Council confirms members to this Council to serve three-year terms, with no more than two consecutive terms served by any individual. The Council shall consist of between 5 and 22 members, none of which may be elected officials. Members shall have demonstrated scholarship or creativity in or distinguished service to the Arts, Humanities or Interpretive Sciences. The Council shall be responsible for the distribution of Arts Lottery Funds and shall support and nurture arts activities in the community.

Board of Almoners

The City Council elects in February members of the Board of six city residents to serve three-year terms beginning in March. The Board serves under the provisions of the Whiting Street Will.

Board of Assessors

The City Council elects a member in February to the Board of three legal voters to begin service in March, for a three-year term. One Assistant Assessor per ward serve one year terms. The Board is empowered to assess, apportion and collect taxes in the manner prescribed by the laws of the Commonwealth.

Board of Health

The City Council elects a member of the Board of three legal voters in February to begin serving three-year terms in March. One member of the Board must be a physician.

Board of Public Works

Members of the Board of seven legal voters are appointed by the Mayor and subject to City Council confirmation in February to begin serving three-year terms in March.

The Board shall hold hearings, investigate and report on matters referred to it by the Mayor or City Council relating to laying out, widening, altering, discontinuing, changing, grading, or repairing streets, sidewalks, sewers or drains and the maintenance, construction and repair of same. The City Council may direct the Board to perform other duties relative to streets, bridges, sidewalks, sewers, drains or other public works including parks, squares, and public places including estimating costs of damages or betterments to same. The Board includes the duties of the former Cemetery Commission, Water Commission, Sewer Commission and the maintenance responsibilities of the Recreation Commission. They shall annually make a report to the City Council and prepare the Departmental Budget with the City Engineer. The Board shall annually make a master plan for all public works in the City and maintain a five-year or other long range plan for municipal projects. The Board may authorize Department of Public Works expenditures.

Capital Improvement Committee

The Mayor appoints members to the Committee of seven City residents to serve three-year terms. One member of the Committee shall come from each of the following committees or departments: Finance, School, and Planning. The Committee shall ascertain what capital outlays will be needed in the next six years and shall present an annual report in November.

Committee on Disabilities

The Mayor shall appoint and the City Council confirm members to this nine member Committee in August to begin serving three-year terms in September. At least half of the members shall themselves have disabilities or have family members with disabilities. The Committee shall study the needs of disabled citizens as regards housing, employment, transportation, public assembly, education, health, and recreation. They shall advocate for the integration of disabled citizens into the life of the City. They shall work with the City's ADA Coordinator to ensure compliance.

Community Preservation Act Committee

Administers the Community Preservation Act funds that may be used for historic preservation, affordable housing and open space preservation.

Conservation Commission

The Mayor appoints and the City Council confirms members to this seven person panel for three-year terms. The Commission shall perform such duties as are enumerated in the Mass. General Laws.

Council on Aging

The Mayor appoints and the City Council confirms members to the Council of fifteen City residents and legal voters to serve three-year terms. The Council shall prepare an annual report. It shall coordinate and carry out programs to meet the needs of the Aging in Northampton.

Central Business Architecture Committee

Oversees the Central Business Architecture Ordinance, whose purpose is to preserve and enhance the pedestrian-scale character, culture, economy of downtown Northampton by preserving historic and architecturally valuable buildings and features, and by encouraging compatible building design. A volunteer board composed of representatives from the real estate industry, the Chamber of Commerce, the Northampton Historical Commission, the building and construction trades industry and a registered architect come together as needed for technical assistance and public hearings for permit applications for downtown renovation and construction projects requiring design review.

Elm Street Historical District Committee

The Mayor appoints and the City Council confirms members to this five person committee to serve three-year terms. One member shall own property in or reside in the District, and one shall be one of two nominations received from the Historical Society, Historical Commission, American Institute of Architects and Board of Realtors. The committee shall preserve and protect the distinctive characteristics of buildings and places significant to the history and architecture of the City of Northampton and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts through programs of maintenance and improvement.

Energy Resources Commission

The Mayor appoints and the City Council confirms members of the seven person Commission to serve three-year terms. The Commission shall promote and develop energy resources in the City, develop programs for conservation and recycling, and advise on programs and policies of the City including grant applications.

Historical Commission

The Mayor appoints and City Council confirms members of this seven person panel to three-year terms. The Commission shall keep records of its meetings and actions and file an annual report to the City Council. It shall be responsible for the preservation, promotion and development of the City's historical assets.

Housing Partnership

The Mayor appoints and the City Council confirms members to this fifteen person Board to serve three-year terms. Members shall represent people of low and moderate income; real estate professionals; and members of interested City Departments, such as Planning and Zoning. The Partnership shall articulate the long and short term housing needs of the community; educate the community about said needs; encourage participation in local government; and assist in preserving low and moderate priced housing stock in Northampton. They shall attempt to bring together members of the public, business people and housing advocates to support affordable housing initiatives, identify and evaluate programs and resources, and recommend proposals, policies and ordinances to the City Council.

Human Rights Commission

The Northampton Human Rights Commission was established in 1998 by the City Council to advocate for the civil rights of all residents and visitors of the City. We respond to complaints made by persons in the city who feel that their human or civil rights under the law have been violated in Northampton. We make referrals to appropriate agencies, such as the Mass. Commission Against Discrimination, when necessary. The Northampton Human Rights Commission also works to raise awareness about human rights issues in the community through educational programming. Commissioners are community volunteers appointed by the mayor with confirmation by the Northampton City Council. Anyone residing in Northampton may apply. The Commission can have as many as 9 members.

License Commission

The License Commission is the local licensing authority for Annual, Seasonal and Short Term Liquor Licenses, along with Weekday Entertainment Licenses for liquor licensed premises, automatic amusement device licenses and common victualler licenses.

Northampton Cable Television Advisory Committee

The Cable Advisory Board (formerly the Cable Access & Ascertainment Board) serves in an ad hoc advisory capacity to the Mayor with the following functions: 1. Assist in the creation of a cable access corporation to operate the new community access studio. 2. Assist in guiding preparation of the new studio and transfer of the studio and equipment from Comcast. 3. Oversight, performance evaluation, budget review as pertaining to the license, and liaison between the City and the cable access corporation. 4. Assist with performance monitoring by the cable provider under the cable license including but not limited to: customer complaint resolution, annual performance evaluation, research on cable and PEG access technology advancements.

Personnel Advisory Committee

The Mayor appoints and the City Council confirms members of this nine person committee, two of whom shall be City Councilors, three of whom shall be City employees, and four of whom shall be non-governmental persons, including three who are personnel professionals and one who is a representative of organized labor. The Committee shall advise and assist the Personnel Director in the review and recommendation of City policies.(three years, no more than two consecutive terms)

Planning Board

The Mayor appoints and the City Council confirms City residents to the seven member Board in February to begin serving five-year terms in March. The Board shall prepare an annual report for the City Council.

Recreation Commission

The Mayor shall appoint and the City Council confirm residents to the nine-member Commission in June to begin serving three-year terms in July. The Commission shall provide, conduct and supervise playgrounds, fields, recreation centers, areas, facilities owned and controlled by the City and shall appoint the Recreation Director.

Registrars of Voters

The Mayor appoints and City Council confirms in February or March for four year terms to begin in April. Members shall equally represent voters of the two leading political parties. The Board shall perform such duties as are required by the laws of the Commonwealth.

Transportation and Parking Commission

The Transportation and Parking Commission meets on a monthly basis to develop transportation and parking policies, develop a Transportation Plan, and provide a balanced multimodal transportation system in the City. The volunteers who serve on the commission are recommended by the Mayor and confirmed by City Council.

Tree Committee

The mission of the Northampton Tree Committee is to increase, protect and maintain the health, beauty, quantity, diversity and vitality of Northampton's trees for the benefit of its citizens and future generations. Tree Committee duties include: develops and recommends a Public Tree Management Plan for adoption by City Council, develops ordinances and guidelines governing the management of the City's public trees, seeks grants and conducts fund-raising to assist the Committee's mission, oversees adherence to state and local laws governing shade trees on public ways and scenic roads

Trust Fund Committee

The City Council elects members to the committee of three legal voters in February to serve a three-year term to begin in March.

Youth Commission

The Youth Commission serves to create a means of communication between city leaders and young people in Northampton. The Northampton Youth Commission is a group of young people between the ages of 13 - 18 who are interested in working to improve the lives of young people in the community by discussing issues of concern and working to provide solutions.

Zoning Board of Appeals

The Board hears and decides zoning appeals, considers applications for special permits and authorizes zoning variances.